

Abraham Lincoln's Journey To Greatness

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

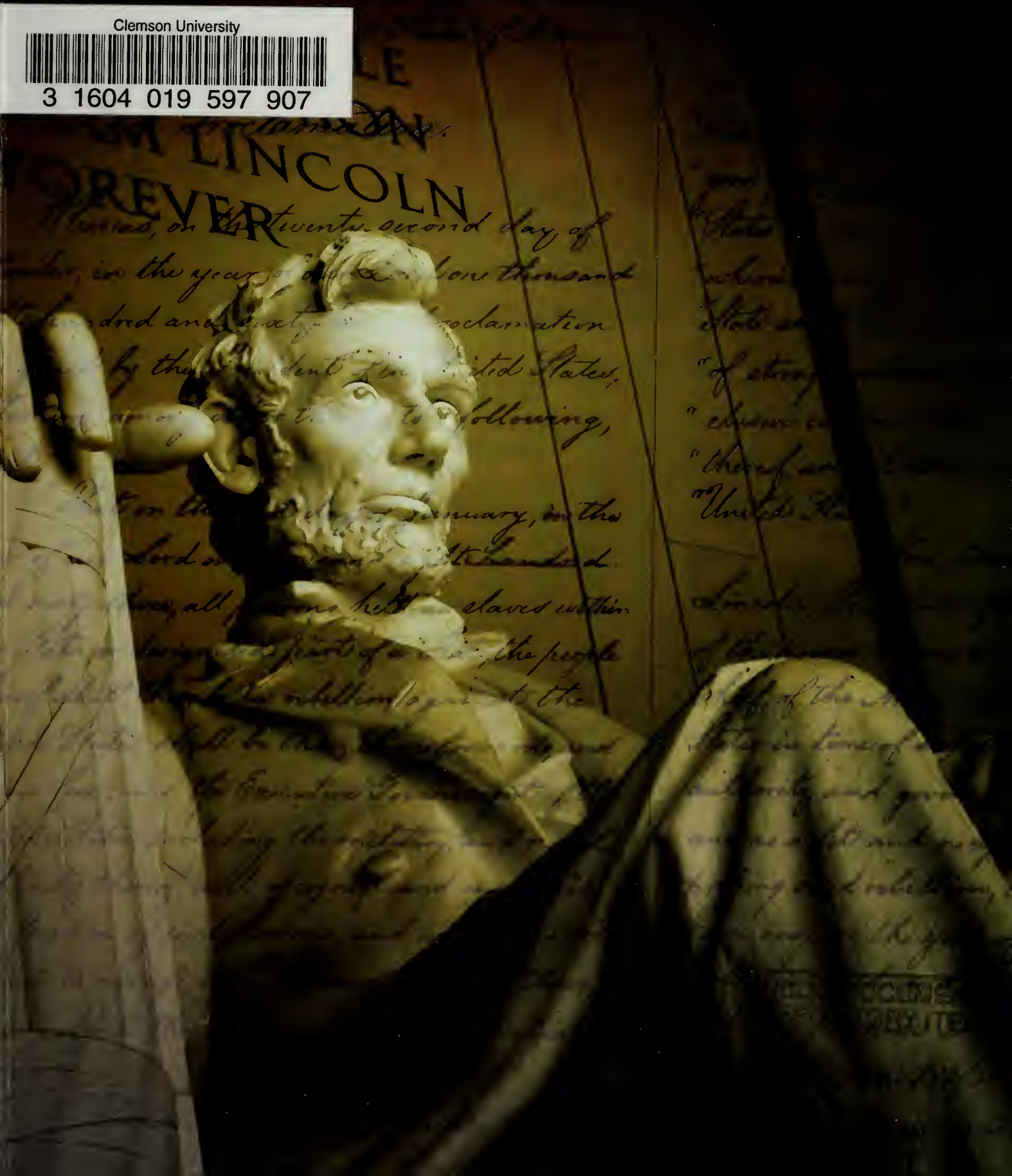


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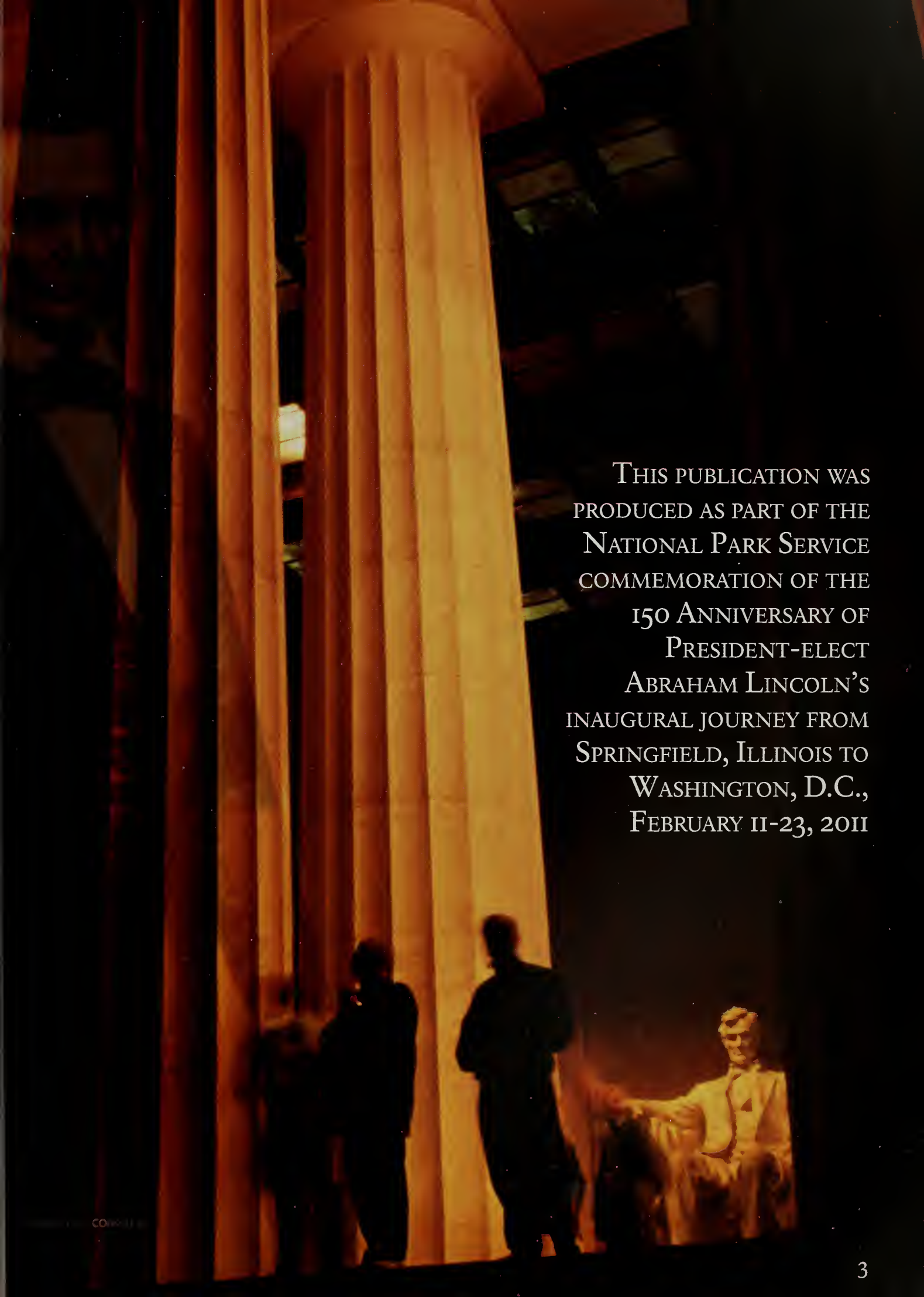


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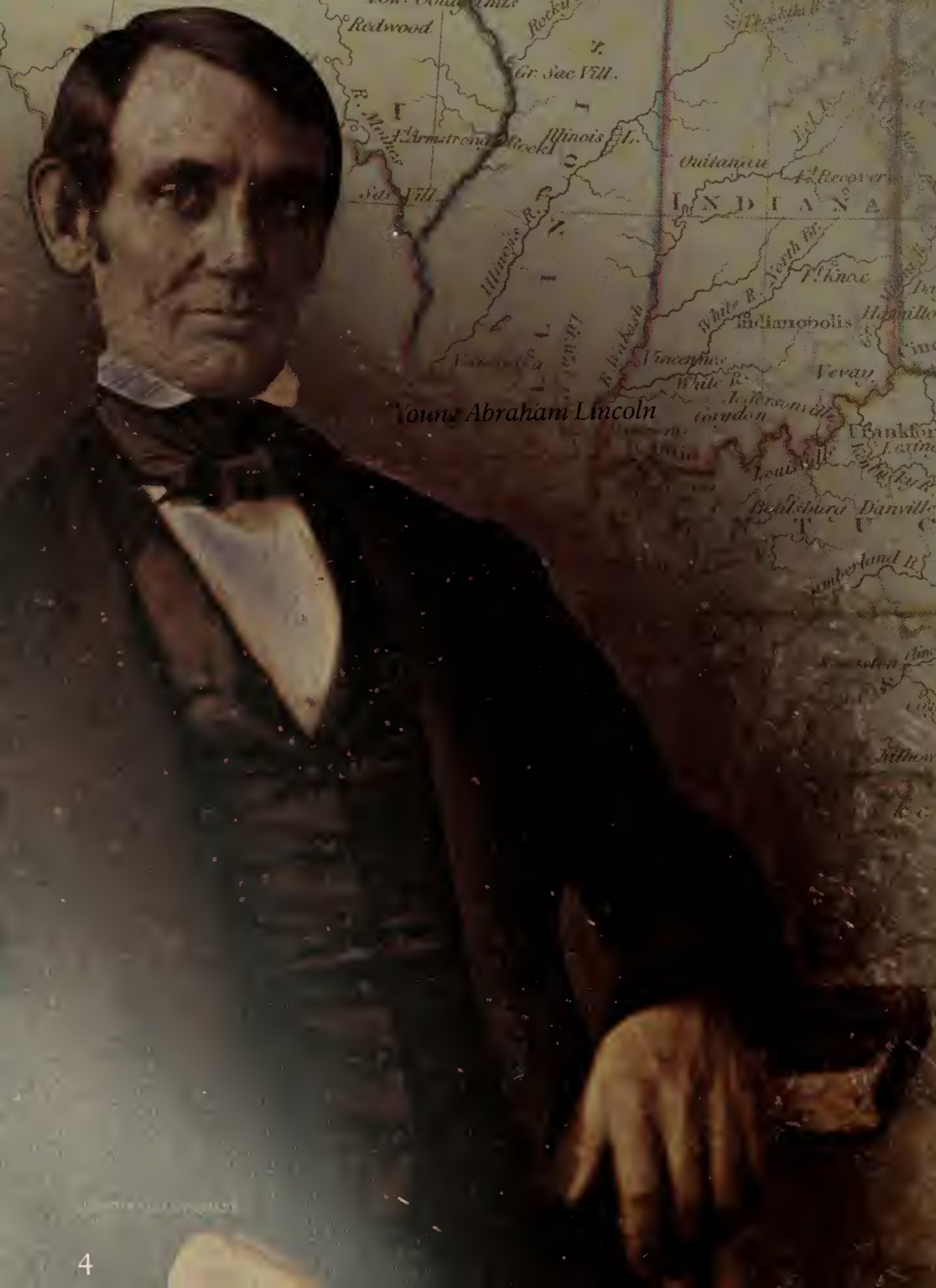
"Fellow-citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves." How prophetic Lincoln's words from his December 1862, Second Annual Message to Congress proved to be. We do remember Abraham Lincoln, and the Civil War that dominated his presidency. We remember Lincoln's words, and his works, and remember him at the places that relate to his life, especially at many of America's National Parks.

Lincoln and the Civil War comprise one of the largest chapters in the National Park Service volume of our nation's history. The National Park Service manages five sites that are solely dedicated to the Lincoln story, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site in Kentucky; Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Indiana; Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Illinois; and, Ford's Theatre National Historic Site and the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. There are four additional National Park sites that have a strong Lincoln connection, Mount Rushmore National Memorial in South Dakota; Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania; Antietam National Battlefield in Maryland; and the White House at Presidents Park in Washington DC. Taken together there are 47 National Park sites that include the Lincoln and Civil War stories as primary interpretive themes. When you include parks that tell the related Civil Rights stories, from antebellum plantations to Brown vs. Board of Education in Kansas, the number jumps to more than 75 of all National Parks. Since nearly one quarter of America's National Parks tell the American story of Civil War to Civil Rights, it's useful to review the times in which Lincoln and his contemporaries lived, and learn more about the legacy they left behind.

A photograph of the interior of the Lincoln Memorial. A large, fluted column dominates the left side of the frame. In the lower right, the seated statue of Abraham Lincoln is visible. Two people are standing in the foreground, looking towards the statue. The lighting is warm and dramatic, with strong shadows.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
COMMEMORATION OF THE
150 ANNIVERSARY OF
PRESIDENT-ELECT
ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S
INAUGURAL JOURNEY FROM
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS TO
WASHINGTON, D.C.,
FEBRUARY 11-23, 2011

An Extraordinary Journey



Abraham Lincoln came of age when America was on the cusp of rapid growth and expansion in the West. In the 1810s, 1820s and 1830s, the nation was filling in the vast areas governed under the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the area roughly between the Appalachian Mountains and Mississippi River. The Northwest Ordinance's prohibition against slavery and the earlier Land Ordinance of 1785, which established a formalized system of land surveying, made the Northwest Territory an attractive place for many settlers, including the Thomas Lincoln family who moved from Kentucky to Indiana in 1816, "This removal was partly on account of slavery; but chiefly on account of the difficulty in land titles in Ky. Lincoln recalled many years later. The Lincoln family migration resumed in 1830, when it moved to Illinois. After a year with his family near Decatur, Illinois, Lincoln set off on his own and moved to New Salem, Illinois. Here he cut his political teeth, winning a seat in the Illinois State legislature in 1834.

It was in the midst of Lincoln's first term in the Illinois Legislature from 1834-1836 that abolitionists were gaining some momentum in the national debate about slavery. Abolitionists espoused the immediate end of slavery throughout the nation and were lead by such people as, William Lloyd Garrison, publisher of the abolitionist newspaper "The Liberator," begun in 1831, and co-founder of the "American Anti Slavery Society," begun two years later. Although never large in numbers, abolitionist leaders like Garrison prompted strong reactions from those in the country who wished to see slavery continue. The Illinois legislature responded by adopting resolutions against abolitionism, which Lincoln and five others opposed. In 1837, Lincoln and fellow Sangamon County legislator, Dan Stone, went further to write protests against the resolutions, stating that they "believe[d] that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy."

Lincoln served four terms in the Illinois legislature, from 1834-1842, during which time he worked to get the state capitol moved from Vandalia to Springfield. It was also at this time, in 1837, that Lincoln moved to Springfield and began what would prove to be a very successful law career. In 1846, he was elected to the U.S.

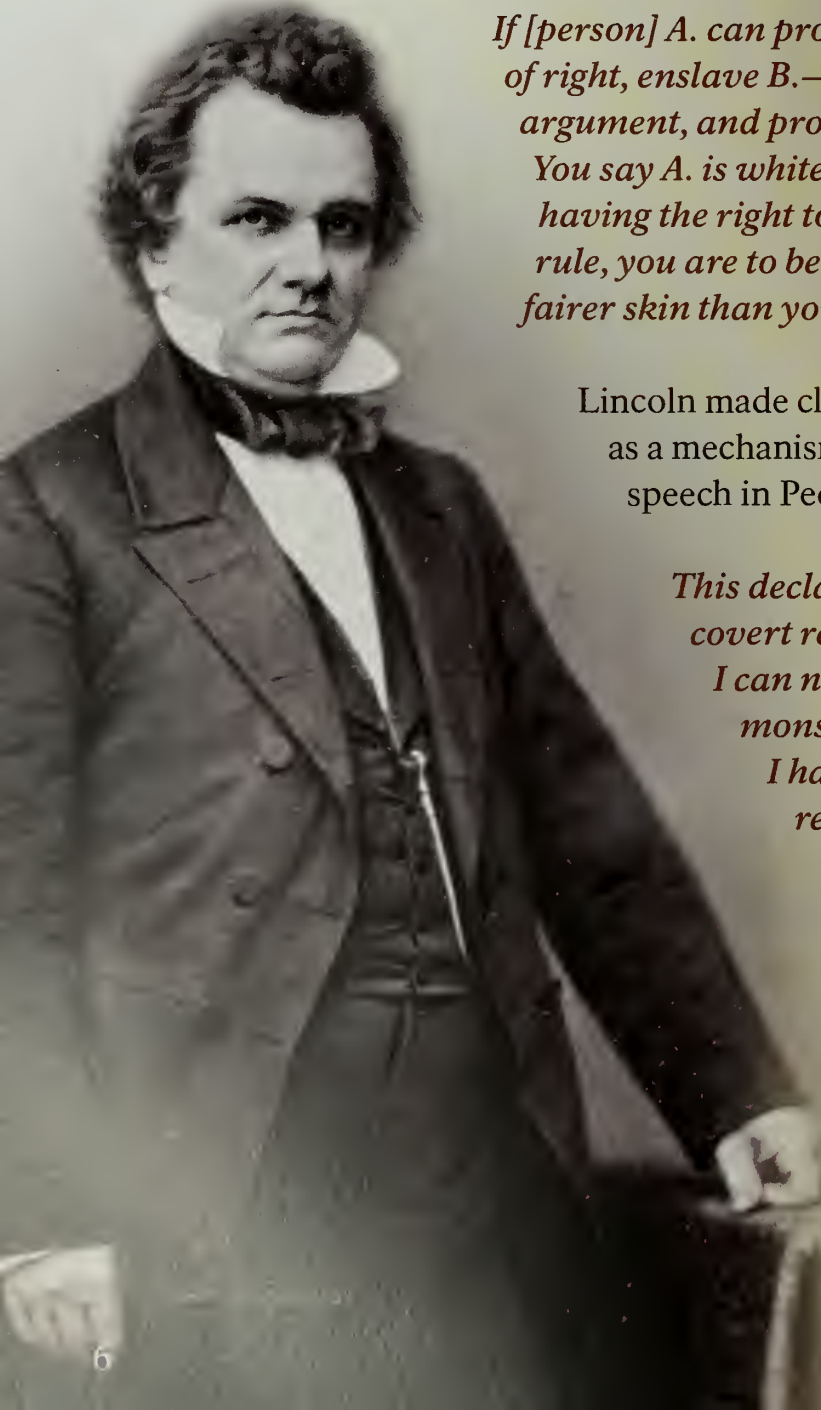
Congress, and served an unremarkable single term during which he voiced opposition to the Mexican War and tried unsuccessfully to abolish the slave trade in Washington, D.C. Lincoln returned to Springfield, following his congressional term, seemingly having had his fill of elective office, and focused on his law career.



Lincoln Law Office

LINCOLN COLLECTION IN INDIANA

But it was the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 that brought Lincoln back into politics. This legislation, championed by United States Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, took the debate on a new state's status as slave or free out of Congress, and put that question to a vote of the residents of the territory. As a result, the "popular sovereignty" concept of the Kansas-Nebraska Act superseded the Missouri Compromise of 1820 by potentially allowing slavery north of the latitude of 36° 30', Missouri's southern border. Many in the North who considered the Missouri Compromise to be a long-standing, binding agreement were infuriated by the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Lincoln stated that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise "aroused him as he had never been before" and he returned to political life. In July 1854, he framed his thoughts in preparation for the many speeches that he intended to make against the expansion of slavery.



If [person] A. can prove, however conclusively, that he may, of right, enslave B.—why may not B. snatch the same argument, and prove equally, that he may enslave A?— You say A. is white, and B. is black. It is color, then; the lighter, having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with a fairer skin than your own.

Lincoln made clear his dislike of the Kansas-Nebraska Act as a mechanism for the spread of slavery in an 1854 speech in Peoria, Illinois.

This declared indifference, but as I must think, covert real zeal for the spread of slavery, I can not but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites—criticising[sic] the Declaration of Independence . . .

Lincoln gave speeches throughout central Illinois during the summer and fall of 1854, campaigning for a

Stephen A. Douglas

seat in the Illinois legislature and also eying a seat in the United States Senate. Lincoln came up short of the necessary state legislative votes to win the U.S. Senate seat. At this time senators were appointed by the state legislator, not a direct vote of the people. Lincoln was not deterred, however, and set his sights on the 1858 senate seat held by Stephen A. Douglas.

Four years after his initial run at a Senate seat, on June 16, 1858, the Illinois Republicans met at the Illinois State house and formally nominated Lincoln to run against Stephen A. Douglas for the U.S. Senate. It was at that June meeting that Lincoln delivered his “House Divided Speech” where he made a prediction about slavery in the nation.

“A house divided against itself cannot stand.”

I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other.

Lincoln continued his assault on Douglas’ Kansas Nebraska Act in a series of seven debates from August through October 1858. The nation focused its attention on Illinois as the Lincoln and Douglas meetings focused on the expansion of slavery. At Jonesboro, Douglas expounded his view of the founding of the nation.

*The
Kansas-Nebraska
Act prompted
deadly violence
between pro and
anti slavery
settlers in the
Kansas territory*

I hold that a negro is not and never ought to be a citizen of the United States. I hold that this government was made on the white basis, by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and should be administered by white men and none others. I do not believe that the Almighty made the negro capable of self-government.

Lincoln wavered slightly during the debates, walking a political tightrope between different geographic sections of Illinois that had varying opinions on slavery and race. Lincoln advocated the separation of races, portraying African American inferiority at one debate, but then called for the ending of slavery and equality of opportunity at another. His consistent message throughout the debates was that the founding fathers did intend that the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution would apply to all. At the final debate in Alton on October 15, Lincoln reemphasized his long held position that the ultimate end of slavery should be the goal for the overall good.

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not mean to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all men were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what they did consider all men created equal—equal in certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This they said, and this they meant.

Book about
the 1858 Lincoln
Douglas Debates
owned by
Lincoln



LINCOLN HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Lincoln lost the 1858 senate race to Douglas, but the fame of the Lincoln-Douglass debates, which had drawn national newspaper coverage, made him a rising star in the new Republican Party. He spent the next two years on the stump speaking in Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, Kansas, New York, and in New England.

“No man ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience.” This was the assessment of a New York Herald reporter who had attended the speech by Lincoln on February 27, 1860. His speech at New York’s Cooper Institute was widely praised for its

thoroughness in research and reasoning. For Lincoln it was a continuation of his crusade against the threat of the spread of slavery. He closed with a call to duty to his new found eastern admirers.

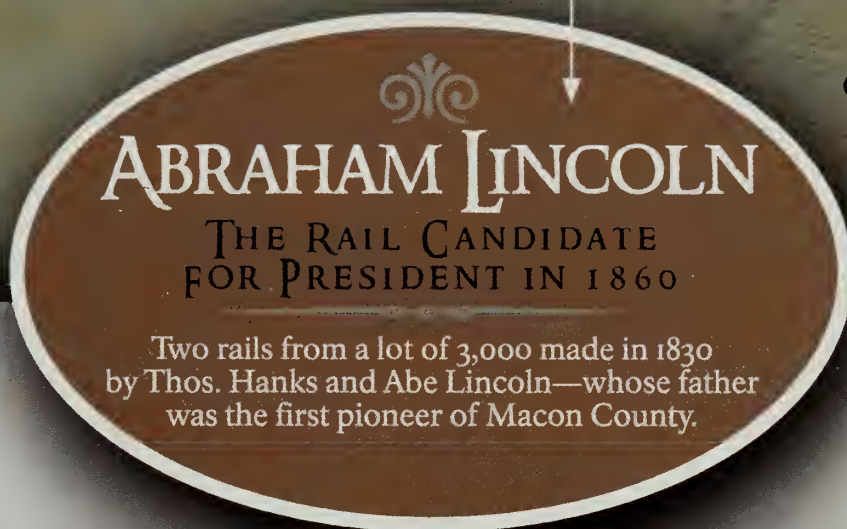
Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the National Territories, and to overrun us here in these Free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty, fearlessly and effectively.

LET US HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND IN THAT FAITH, LET US, TO THE END, DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT.

Lincoln followed his Cooper Institute success with an intense speaking schedule, doing his best to accommodate as many speaking requests as possible from Republican organizations throughout New England.

Lincoln’s supporters, who now included many new admirers outside of Illinois, began to think of Lincoln as a potential presidential candidate.

The first step for the Lincoln campaign was the Illinois state Republican convention in Decatur. The convention opened on May 9, 1860 in a specially constructed a wood and canvas facility called the “Wigwam,” a term that was popularly used for western Republican Party convention headquarters. Enthusiasm was very strong for Lincoln, especially when Lincoln’s cousin John Hanks marched into the Wigwam with two split rails labeled



Chicago Wigwam Interior

*Photo of the
Chicago Wigwam*



LINCOLN COLLECTION IN INDIANA

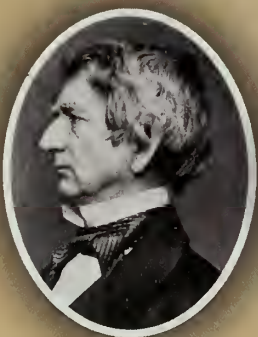
Thus the “Rail Splitter” slogan, attributed to Decatur politician Richard J. Oglesby, became an important part of the presidential campaign. Oglesby located a fence in the Decatur area that Lincoln and his cousin John Hanks were said to have had made in 1830, which further added to the image. Many of those attending the state convention felt that Lincoln would not win at the national convention, but he received a unanimous Illinois endorsement nonetheless.



*Chicago, Illinois at
the time of the Republican
National Convention*

While the relatively young Republican Party was working to position itself behind one candidate, the Democratic Party was splintering. The Democratic National Convention opened on April 23 in Charleston, South Carolina but regional differences between northern and southern delegates resulted in adjournment without a candidate or a platform. The Democrats tried again

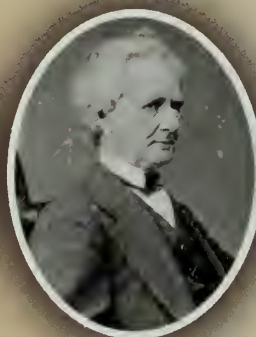
on June 18, at Baltimore, but still had much disagreement resulting in the departure of many of the southern delegates. The remaining delegates selected Lincoln's Illinois rival, Stephen A. Douglas, while the disgruntled southern delegates met at another nearby venue and nominated John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. Meanwhile, on May 10, Tennessean John Bell was nominated by the newly formed Constitutional Union Party, from elements of the old Whig and American or "Know-Nothing" parties.



William Seward



Edward Bates



Simon Cameron



Salmon Chase

The Republican National Convention opened in Chicago on May 16, 1860 at the Chicago Wigwam, at Lake and Wacker Streets. New Yorker William H. Seward was the front runner among the long list of hopefuls, but Ohioan Salmon P. Chase, Missourian Edward Bates, and Pennsylvanian Simon Cameron were also in contention. Lincoln was still considered by most to be a long shot.

Lincoln did not attend the Chicago convention, but his advocates, led by his Eighth Judicial Circuit companion Judge David Davis, were in Chicago to push Lincoln's interests. All sides were willing to go to great measures to secure the nomination of their candidate. But Lincoln had sent a word of warning to the convention reading *Make no contracts that will bind me.*

Later that day, the results of the convention voting arrived in Springfield through the telegraph office on the north side of the square. Lincoln was still in his law office, on the west side of the square, when the initial results were brought to him. 233 votes were needed to secure the nomination and the first ballot showed Seward with 173 ½ votes, Lincoln with 102 votes, Bates with 48 votes, Cameron with 50 ½ votes, and Chase with 49. Lincoln had made his way to the telegraph office by the time the second ballot results came in. The second voting showed a strong swing toward Lincoln who received 181 votes to Seward's 184. Bates had 35. The third ballot put Lincoln even closer, but not

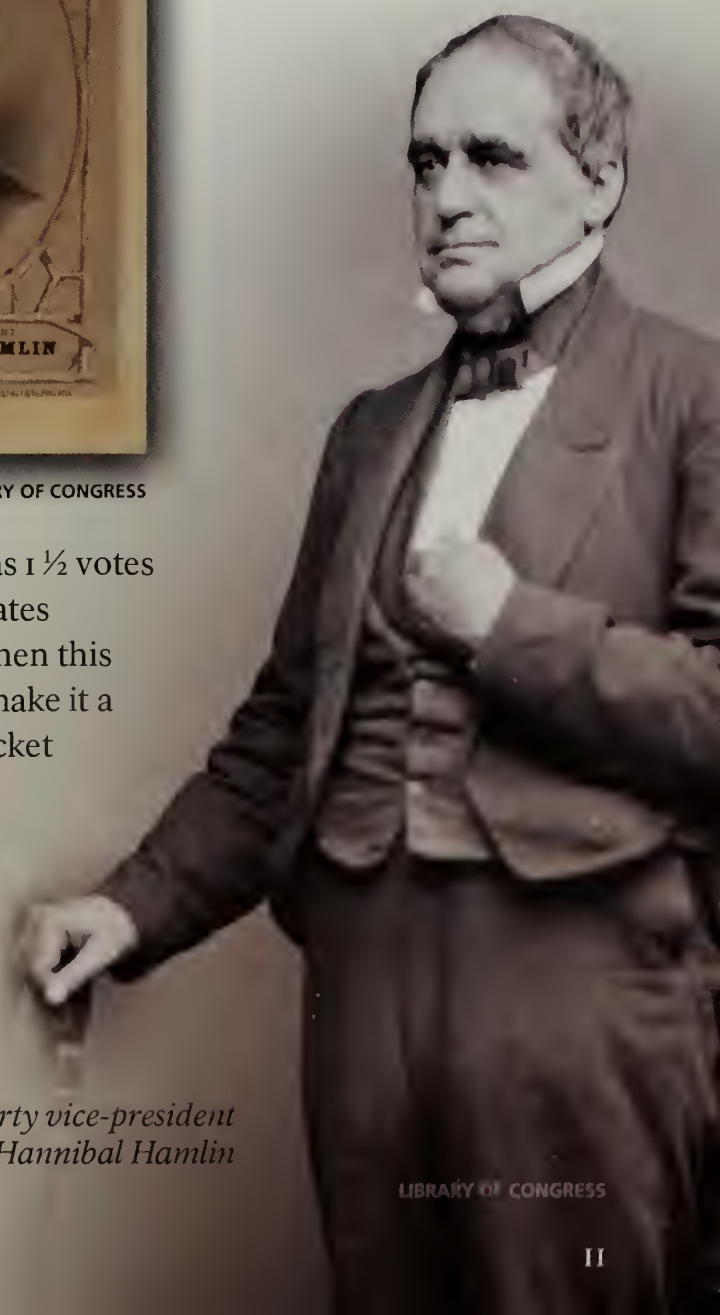


1860
Republican Party
Presidential
engraving

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quite there, with 231 ½ votes to Seward's 180. Lincoln was 1 ½ votes short, but that was quickly made up when several delegates changed their votes to give Lincoln the required 233. When this happened, the Seward delegates changed their vote to make it a unanimous nomination. The Republican presidential ticket was balanced with former Democrat and eastern Senator Hannibal Hamlin of Maine as the vice presidential candidate. Lincoln received the congratulations of all assembled at the telegraph office but then excused himself from the group stating "*Well Gentlemen there is a little woman at our house who is probably more interested in this dispatch than I am.*"

*Republican Party vice-president
Hannibal Hamlin*



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REPUBLICAN TICKET.

For President,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Vice President,

HANNIBAL HAMLIN.

Electors for President and Vice President,

LEONARD SWETT,

JOHN M. PALMER,

ALLEN C. FULLER,

WM. B. PLATO,

LAWRENCE WELDON,

WM. P. KELLOGG,

JAMES STARK,

JAMES C. CONKLING,

H. P. H. BROMWELL,

THOMAS G. ALLEN,

JOHN OLNEY.

Governor,

RICHARD YATES.

Lieutenant Governor,

FRANCIS A. HOFMANN.

Secretary of State,

OZIAS M. HATCH.

Auditor of Public Accounts,

JESSE K. DUBOIS.

State Treasurer,

WILLIAM BUTLER.

Superintendent of Public Instruction,

NEWTON BATEMAN.

Congress,

BENJAMIN M. PRENTISS.

Legislature,

BENJAMIN B. METZ,

SAUL VANDEVENTER.

Circuit Clerk,

MICHAEL P. MACE.

Sheriff,

HENRY BONNEL.

Coroner,

JOB YORK.



LINCOLN HOME NATIONAL
HISTORIC SITE

Republican Party ballot for the 1860 election

There were now four candidates running for President in 1860. Lincoln and the relatively new Republican Party pledged to protect slavery where it existed, but to prevent the expansion of slavery into the western territories or any new states. Stephen Douglas, candidate of the “northern wing” of the Democratic Party, continued to call for “popular sovereignty” to answer the question of slavery in the territories, while John C. Breckinridge and the southern Democrats vowed to protect the institution of slavery and its ability to expand into the western territories, even at the cost of sundering the Union. Finally, John Bell of the cobbled-together Constitutional Union Party, espoused a vague platform that pledged to find some way to protect slavery and still preserve the Union.

Life for the Lincolns and their Springfield neighbors would prove to be very exciting for the remainder of 1860. Political rallies were continually held by the Republican and Democratic clubs. By early summer the Republicans



Modern artist's rendition of the August 8, 1860 Republican rally parade passing by Lincoln's Springfield home

were constructing a smaller version of the Chicago Wigwam on the southeast corner of Sixth and Monroe Streets. Springfield's Wigwam was a circular frame building with a capacity of 3,000, and served as the venue for speeches by local Lincoln supporters and visiting dignitaries. The Democrats constructed their headquarters building at the northeast corner of Fifth and Jefferson Streets. The new building was first known as "Douglas Hall" but was soon referred to as "The Barn."

Lincoln became a very popular national personality with politicians, office seekers, and the general public. One of the first visitors of note was Thurlow Weed, New York political leader, power broker, and publisher of the *Albany Evening Journal*. Weed arrived in Springfield on May 24, following the disappointing Chicago convention where he was working for Seward's nomination. Weed emerged from a five-hour meeting with Lincoln with a good impression describing Lincoln as "sagacious and practical." Weed campaigned for Lincoln and returned to

visit the president-elect Lincoln in December. In a letter to Lyman Trumbull, Lincoln wrote “Weed was here, and saw me He asked for nothing; and said N. Y. is safe, without condition.” People had to come to Springfield to see Lincoln because, as was the custom, Lincoln did not campaign for the presidency. Unlike today, it was considered inappropriate for someone to campaign for the presidency. Rather, it was felt that the “office” should seek the person, the person should not seek the office.

By June, Lincoln had taken advantage of Illinois Governor John Wood’s offer of the use of the Governor’s Reception Room in the statehouse. The New York *Herald* described the reception room in November 1860.

It is altogether inadequate for the accommodation of Mr. Lincoln’s visitors. Twenty persons will not find standing room in it, and the simultaneous presence of a dozen only will cause inconvenience. The room is furnished with a sofa, half-a-dozen armchairs, a table and a desk, that later being assigned to the private secretary, who is always present during visiting hours.



Wide-Awakes
holding oil
lamps mounted
on poles

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The following month brought the highest level of excitement yet to the Lincoln home and neighborhood. Preparations had been ongoing for a large Republican Rally that would take place on August 8. Twenty-one Republican “Wide Awake” clubs were on hand and special trains brought 180 carloads of the Lincoln faithful to the rally. Hundreds of Wide Awake clubs sprang up in 1860. Dressed in capes and carrying lighted oil lamps mounted atop four-foot poles (which could easily be converted

to cudgels), the Wide-Awakes marched in support of Lincoln and other Republican candidates, monitored polling places on election day, and added zest and excitement to the campaign. The parade, which included a wide variety of floats, wound through the streets of Springfield and paused in front of the Lincoln Home. Lincoln emerged dressed in a white suit and, though he declined to speak, stood by the front door long enough for a photographer to capture the scene.

The parade moved on to the fairgrounds on the west side of the city where five speaking platforms had been erected, speeches were given, and lemonade and whole cooked steers were served. Upon his arrival, Lincoln’s

carriage was overrun with supporters who carried him above the crowd to one of the platforms where he made a few remarks,

I appear upon the ground here at this time only for the purpose of affording myself the best opportunity of seeing you, and enabling you to see me. I confess with gratitude, be it understood, that I did not suppose that my appearance among you would create the tumult which I now witness.

Lincoln thanked the crowd for their support and made a plea to the group. “Having said this much, allow me to now say that it is my wish that you will hear this public discussion by others of our friends who are here present for the purpose of addressing you, and that you will kindly let me be silent.” Lincoln employed some deceit in order to make a safe escape from the fairgrounds by leaving on horseback rather than returning to his carriage, which was still surrounded.

Lincoln understood the importance of making his image available for the campaign and regularly indulged artists of various media. In late March he sat for sculptor Leonard W. Volk, who had recently finished a sculpture of Stephen A. Douglas. Volk visited the Lincolns at home on May 18, and presented Mrs. Lincoln with a cabinet size bust of her husband.

During the summer Lincoln posed in front of his home for Boston photographer Adam Whipple. Whipple captured Lincoln as well as Willie and Tad and neighbors in varying degrees of clarity. Artists also painted, sketched, and sculpted Lincoln’s image and produced images of the interior and exterior of his home.

The correspondence also continued to come in, including the famed letter of New York school girl Grace Bedell, who wrote

I have got 4 brother’s and part of them will vote for you any way and if you will let your whiskers grow I will try and get the rest of them to vote for you you would look a great deal better for your face is so thin. All the ladies like whiskers and they would tease their husband’s to vote for you and then you would be President. My father is a going to vote for you and if I was a man I would vote for you to but I will try and get every one to vote for you that I can I think that rail fence around your picture makes it look very pretty

Sculpture Leonard Volk with bust of Lincoln



Lincoln replied

I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughters. I have three sons—one seventeen, one nine, and one seven, years of age. They, with their mother, constitute my whole family.

As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affection if I were to begin it now?

The 1860 election was held in two parts in some states with the election for state offices held in October, one month prior to the national election. The results of the October elections were considered an indication of how the national election would go and Lincoln was keeping a close eye on the returns in the key states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. As the October returns came in Lincoln wrote to his law partner, William Herndon, “*it is entirely certain that Pennsylvania and Indiana have gone Republican very largely, Ohio of course is safe.*” The results of this preliminary election were cause to celebrate in Springfield and prompted the local Wide-Awakes to parade to the Lincoln home where a large crowd gathered until Lincoln emerged to acknowledge their cheers. They then moved on to the Springfield Wigwam to continue their rally. Two days later, Lincoln wrote to William Seward “*it now really looks as if the Government is about to fall into our hands. Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana have surpassed all expectation, even the most extravagant.*”

On Election Day, November 6, 1860, Lincoln left his statehouse office to vote at the Sangamon County Courthouse, just east of the statehouse. Lincoln’s law partner Herndon recalled that Lincoln wasn’t going to vote at all.

Telegraph machine from the 1860’s



On the morning of election day I stepped in to see Mr. Lincoln, and was surprised to learn that he did not intend to cast his vote. I knew of course that he did so because of a feeling that the candidate for a Presidential office ought not vote for his own electors; but when I suggested the plan of cutting off the Presidential electors and voting for the State officers, he was struck with the idea, and at last consented.

Lincoln then went home for dinner and later that evening joined other Republicans who filled the statehouse’s Representatives Hall to await the election returns. Preliminary results began to arrive after seven o’clock but not quickly enough for Lincoln who went to the telegraph office to get the results more quickly. The Midwest states reported first, in Lincoln’s favor, but it was not until after eleven o’clock that it was reported that Lincoln had won

*1860,
Lincoln-Hamlin
Presidential
campaign
button*

*Representatives
hall at the Old
State Capitol in
Springfield*

*The Lincoln's
home in Springfield,
Illinois*

November

BELINDA ELECTED PRESIDENT

ation's first Republican Pres



the important state of Pennsylvania. The election seemed fairly secure but Lincoln would feel better once New York reported. The group was invited from the telegraph office to wait for the New York results at Watson's Saloon at the south side of the public square, where the Republican ladies had supper waiting. It was at Watson's that Lincoln received the report that he had won New York. Mary had joined her husband at the statehouse to await the returns, and also attended the dinner, but had gone home prior to receiving the news from New York. At about 1:30 a.m. Lincoln proceeded home announcing "*Mary, Mary, we are elected!*"

A dark cloud hung over the election festivities however. Although Lincoln had won the majority of electoral votes, with 180 (Breckinridge had 72, Bell 39, and Douglas 12), he would enter office with slightly less than 40% of the popular vote. Lincoln's name did not appear on the ballot in 10 of the 11 states that subsequently seceded from the Union, and not long after his election, Lincoln learned that he was being hanged in effigy in several of those states. Lincoln won his hometown of Springfield by only sixty-nine votes, but had lost Sangamon County to Stephen Douglas by 42 votes.

Lincoln's activities as president-elect didn't change dramatically from those as the Republican nominee, other than the increased numbers who wished to see him. The New York Herald reported his daily schedule.

Mr. Lincoln makes his appearance in the statehouse regularly before eight o'clock, a.m. He is often found there earlier than the state officers, and sometimes is even sooner ready for work than his private secretary, who sleeps in the building.

The first thing done in the morning is the opening and reading of his daily mail matter. When visitors of distinction are in town who are entitled to more attention than the ordinary crowd of callers, they usually seek his presence at an early hour, and their hearings then take place under lock. At ten a.m. the door of the reception room is opened, and the general levees commence, and continue until noon. At one p.m. Mr. Lincoln repairs to dinner, after which he allows himself to rest until three p.m., when he again receives calls until half-past five, at which time he retires from the public gaze.

After supper he engages either in conversations with intimate political friends, or works with his secretary, sifting his correspondence, in

editing replies, etc. Light is seen in his room very late every evening, and he hardly ever allows anything to lay over unattended until the next day.

Eight days after Lincoln's election, Georgian Alexander Stephens gave a pro union speech to the Georgia state legislature. Lincoln had served in the U.S. House of Representatives with Stephens and, in December, Lincoln wrote to Stephens asking for a copy of the speech. Stephens responded with a warning to Lincoln about the threats from "fanatics" in the south.

Personally, I am not your enemy—far from it; and however widely we may differ politically, yet I trust we both have an earnest desire to preserve the Union. . . . When men come under the influence of fanaticism, there is no telling where their impulses or passions may drive them. In addressing you thus, I would have you understand me as being not a personal enemy, but as one who would have you do what you can to save our common country. A word fitly spoken by you now would be like 'apples of gold in pictures of silver.' "

Lincoln replied with reassurance about the Republican Party's political position regarding slavery.

Do the people of the South really entertain fears that a Republican administration would, directly or indirectly, interfere with their slaves, or with them, about their slaves? If they do, I wish to assure you, as once a friend, and still, I hope, not an enemy, that there is no cause for such fears.

President James
Buchanan



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He added, however, the party's opinion about slavery itself.

You think slavery is right and ought to be extended; while we think it is wrong and ought to be restricted. That I suppose is the rub. It certainly is the only substantial difference between us.

Meanwhile, in Washington, President James Buchanan gave his final annual message to congress, on December 3, 1860, chastising the north for their interference in slavery.

The immediate peril arises . . . from the fact that the incessant and violent agitation of the slavery question throughout the North for the last quarter of a century has at length produced its malign influence on the slaves and inspired them with vague notions of freedom. Hence a sense of security no longer exists around the family altar.

Upon hearing that congress was discussing some compromise measures to alleviate the slavery crisis; Lincoln reaffirmed his position to Illinois Senator Trumbull.

Let there be no compromise on the question of extending slavery. If there be, all our labor is lost, and, ere long, must be done again. The dangerous ground—that into which some of our friends have a hankering to run—is Pop. Sov. Have none of it. Stand firm. The tug has to come, & better now, than any time hereafter.

The tug came on December 20, 1860 when South Carolina adopted an ordinance of secession, breaking ties to the United States. Lincoln had voiced his opinion of secession three days earlier.

My opinion is that no state can, in any way lawfully, get out of the Union, without the consent of the others; and that it is the duty of the President, and other government functionaries to run the machine as it is.

Other southern state legislatures were also considering secession. Representatives from the more ardently secessionists states visited those states that were not as enthused to address their state legislators. On December 17, Mississippian, William L. Harris, addressed the Georgia legislature in an attempt to persuade Georgia to join the secession movement.

Our fathers made this government for the white man, rejecting the negro as an ignorant, inferior, barbarian race, incapable of self-government, and not, therefore, entitled to be associated with the white man upon terms of civil, political, or social equality.

This new administration comes to power, under the solemn pledge to overturn and strike down this great feature of our Union, without which it would never have been formed, and to substitute in its stead their new theory of the universal equality of the black and white races.

Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, the part of Mississippi is chosen, she will never submit to the principles and policy of this Black Republican Administration. She had rather see the last of her race, men, women and children, immolated in one common funeral pile, than to see them subjected to the degradation of civil, political and social equality with the negro race.

Lieutenant
General
Winfield Scott,
General-in-Chief of
the United States
Army



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The tension and uncertainty of the situation prompted Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, General-in-Chief of the United States Army, to write Lincoln directly with a memorandum stating the dangers of secession and predicting that the south would attempt to seize southern forts prior to secession. One day after South Carolina's secession vote, Lincoln wrote to Illinois Congressman Elihu Washburne to pass along to General Scott that *"I shall be obliged to him to be as well prepared as he can to either hold, or retake the forts, as the case may require, at, and after the inauguration."*

In Washington, President Buchanan and congressional committees were still working to develop compromise solutions in an attempt to appease the South. On January 6, Pennsylvania Republican Congressman James T. Hale wrote Lincoln asking about the compromises. Lincoln still held firm.

We have just carried an election on principles fairly stated to the people. Now we are told in advance, the government shall be broken up, unless we surrender to those we have beaten, before we take the offices. In this they are either attempting to play upon us, or they are in dead earnest. Either way, if we surrender, it is the end of us, and of the government.



Following Lincoln's election, the State of South Carolina votes to secede from the Union.

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In early February, Lincoln wrote a stern letter to William Seward regarding the compromises.

I say now, however, as I have all the while said, that on the territorial question—that is, the question of extending slavery under the national auspices,—I am inflexible. I am for no compromise which assists or permits the extension of the institution on soil owned by the nation. And any trick by which the nation is to acquire territory, and then allow some local authority to spread slavery over it, is as obnoxious as any other.

I take it that to effect some such result as this, and to put us again on the high-road to a slave empire is the object of all these proposed compromises. I am against it.

With his time in Springfield drawing short, Lincoln had vacated the governor's reception room on December 28, 1860 and planned to spend most of his time at home. He also made arrangements for use of space above his brother-in-law Clark M. Smith's store, "Yates & Smith," on the south side of the statehouse square, to draft his inaugural address.

Lincoln made arrangements for a January 30 trip to see his aged stepmother, Sarah Bush Lincoln near the eastern Illinois town of Charleston. Lincoln spent most of January 31, with his stepmother and visited his father's grave. In the evening Lincoln brought his stepmother to Charleston to attend a reception in Lincoln's honor. Sarah would recall this meeting four years later, "*I . . . felt in my heart that something would happen to him and when he came down to see me after he was elected president I still felt that something told me that something would befall Abe and that I should see him no more.*"

In the midst of the excitement of making these last minute details for a move to the White House, word reached Springfield that between January 9 and February 1, six more states – Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas – had followed South Carolina into secession and had formed the Confederate States of America on February 4, 1861. Jefferson Davis was elected president and Lincoln's old pro-Union congressional colleague, Alexander H. Stephens, was elected Vice-President.

*Jefferson Davis,
President of
the Confederate
States of America*



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Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln hosted one last reception in their Springfield home on the evening of February 6, 1861. The St. Louis *Missouri Democrat* reported on the event.

Mr. Lincoln threw open his house for a general reception of all the people who felt disposed to give him and his lady a parting call. The levee lasted from seven to twelve o'clock in the evening, and the house thronged by thousands up to a late hour. Mr. Lincoln received the guests as they entered and were made known. They then passed on, and were introduced to Mrs. Lincoln, who stood near the center of the parlors, and who, I must say, acquitted herself most gracefully and admirably. She is a lady of fine figure and accomplished address, and is well calculated to grace and do honors at the White House.

Mary Lincoln



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The Lincoln's dog "Fido"

LINCOLN HOME
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Two days after their farewell reception, the Lincoln family vacated their home of seventeen years and moved into the Chenery House for their last week in Springfield. The Lincolns determined that they would keep their home and made arrangements to rent it to Mr. and Mrs. Lucian Tilton for \$350 per year. Mr. Tilton was the president of the Great Western Railroad, the same line that Lincoln would use to depart Springfield for Washington. The Lincolns also made arrangements to have their friends, the Roll family, take care of their beloved dog Fido.

One of the last details for Lincoln prior to his departure was to get his legal practice in order. Late in the afternoon of February 10, Lincoln returned to his old law office. He and Herndon reviewed pending court cases and talked about old times. Herndon recalled the visit.

He gathered a bundle of books and papers he wished to take with him and started to go; but before leaving he made a strange request that the sign-board which swung on its rusty hinges at the foot of the stairway should remain 'Let it hang there undisturbed,' he said, with a significant lowering of his voice. 'Give our clients to understand that the election of a President makes no change in the firm of Lincoln and Herndon. If I live I'm coming back some time and then we'll go right on practicing law as if nothing had ever happened.'

On the morning of February 11, a carriage arrived at the Chenery House to take Lincoln to the train station. Lincoln had already tied his luggage together and labeled the attached card *A. Lincoln, Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C.* and was assisted by Lincoln's African-American neighbor Jameson Jenkins. The initial plan for the Lincoln family called for Lincoln and Robert to leave ahead of Mary, Willie and Tad, who would join the inaugural train somewhere on the east coast. This plan was altered however, due in part to Mary's objections, and Mary and boys caught up to Lincoln later in the day in Indianapolis. Lincoln and Robert were accompanied on the initial leg of the journey by several officials and a variety of reporters.

A crowd said to have numbered around 1,000 had gathered at the Great Western Railroad Station to see Lincoln off. Lincoln went through the gathering of friends and neighbors, shaking hands with as many as he could, and then waited inside the station for his departure. Just before 8:00 o'clock, Lincoln climbed the train and, turned and in addressing the gathering, reflected on his years in Springfield; the death of their son Eddie in 1850; and, the task awaiting him in Washington.



SANGAMON VALLEY COLLECTION

*The Great Western
Railroad Depot*

My friends—No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe every thing. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being, who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me, and remain with you and be every where for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

Lincoln had not prepared remarks in advance, so when the train pulled out of the station, he sat down and began to write out his farewell remarks. For some reason, whether the jolting of the car or his own fatigue or emotion, Lincoln's Secretary John Nicolay finished the transcription.



THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

Map of Lincoln's Inaugural train route

The Inaugural Train Ride

Abraham Lincoln traveled through more than 83 cities and towns in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Maryland, on his way to Washington from February 11-23, 1861. For most of the trip through northern states Lincoln was greeted by countless supporters with great enthusiasm and was called upon to make remarks at each of his stops. His time in some communities was very brief, just long enough to resupply with water for the steam engine, for example, others were overnight visits. During the course of the trip Lincoln developed standard remarks that he often repeated. He sometimes introduced his family, often provided a joke or two about himself or the circumstances of his visit. He sometimes provided insight into the developing crisis that was awaiting him in Washington, but always remaining optimistic. Lincoln was received by local officials at his stops, from entire state legislatures to governors and mayors. Indeed, Lincoln's route to Washington was not designed to be expeditious,



but political. It provided an opportunity for Lincoln to “campaign” for support of his coming presidency at a time of growing national unrest.

At about 11:30 a.m. on February 11, Lincoln’s train stopped at the Indiana state line where a committee of the Indiana state legislature welcomed Lincoln and a large number of politicians boarded the train for the ride to Indianapolis. The Inaugural train arrived at the Indianapolis station, at Missouri and Washington Streets, at about 5:00 p.m. where Lincoln was greeted by Governor Oliver P. Morton and a 34 gun salute. Lincoln commented that he wouldn’t say much but offered a word of encouragement to the people, appealing to them for help in saving the Union.

While I do not expect, upon this occasion, or on any occasion, till after I get to Washington, to attempt any lengthy speech, I will only say that to the salvation of this Union there needs but one single thing—the hearts of a people like yours. When the people rise in masses in behalf of the Union and the liberties of their country, truly may it be said, “The gates of hell shall not prevail against them.”

I, as already intimated, am but an accidental instrument, temporary, and to serve but for a limited time, but I appeal to you again to constantly bear in mind that with you, and not with politicians, not with Presidents, not with office-seekers, but with you, is the question, “Shall the Union and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generation?”

Following those remarks, Lincoln joined a procession, said to have numbered 20,000 to the Bates House, at the northwest corner of Illinois and Washington Streets, where he spent the night. At the Bates House Lincoln spoke from

the balcony on what was then a hypothetical situation, but would soon become a real decision for him, defending Federal property and other interests in the south.

The words ``coercion'' and ``invasion'' are in great use about these days. Suppose we were simply to try if we can, and ascertain what, is the meaning of these words.

But if the Government, for instance, but simply insists upon holding its own forts, or retaking those forts which belong to it, or the enforcement of the laws of the United States in the collection of duties upon foreign importations, or even the withdrawal of the mails from those portions of the country where the mails themselves are habitually violated; would any or all of these things be coercion?



Abraham Lincoln

On February 12, Lincoln's fifty-second birthday, Lincoln had breakfast at the Governor's mansion at the northwest corner of Illinois and Market Streets, after which Lincoln and Governor Morton walked over to the statehouse at the northwest corner of Washington and Capitol where Lincoln met with members of the legislature. At 11:00 a.m. the entire Lincoln family boarded the train, joined by members of the committee from Ohio and Kentucky and continued their journey.

Lincoln's train arrived in Cincinnati a little after 3:00 p.m. Lincoln was welcomed by Mayor Richard M. Bishop and they joined what was a two hour procession by carriage, which included an escort by the Washington Dragoon regiment, to the Burnet House at the northwest corner of Third and Vine. At the Burnet House Lincoln addressed the crowd with a call for unity and an optimistic message about the "National difficulties."

I could not look upon this vast assemblage without being made aware that all parties were united in this reception. This is as it should be. It is as it should have been if Senator Douglas had been elected. It is as it should have been if Mr. Bell had been elected—as it should have been if Mr. Breckinridge had been elected—as it should ever be when any citizen of the United States is constitutionally elected President of the United States.

Lincoln also took advantage of the location of Cincinnati to address the citizens in the neighboring slave state of Kentucky. He offered a hope for peace with a warning that he would not be to blame if peace did not hold.

We mean to leave you alone, and in no way to interfere with your institution; to abide by all and every compromise of the constitution, . . . We mean to remember that you are as good as we; that there is no difference between us, other than the difference of circumstances. We mean to recognize, and bear in mind always, that you have as good hearts in your bosoms as other people, or as we claim to have, and treat you accordingly.”

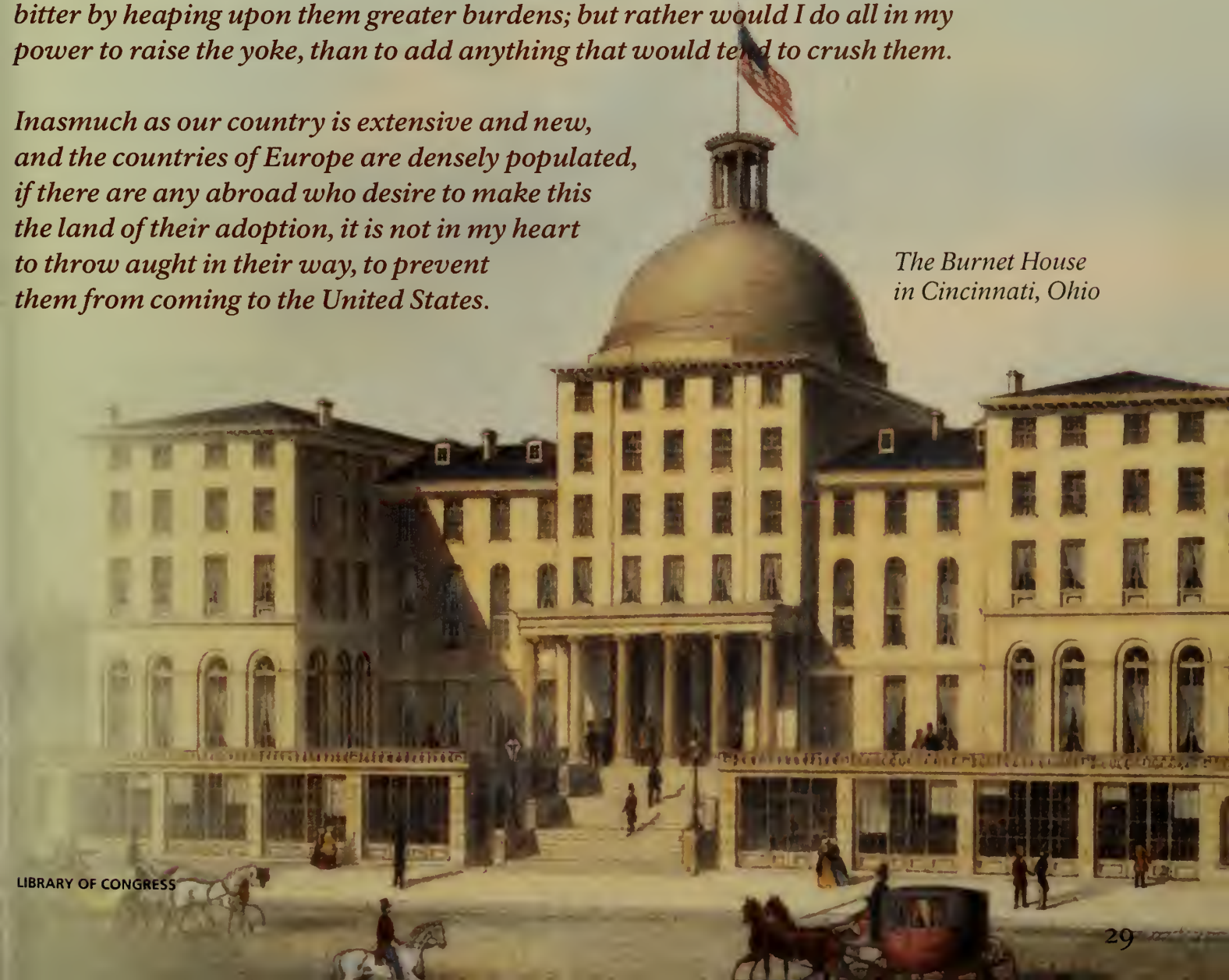
Fellow citizens of Kentucky---friends---brethren, may I call you—in my new position, I see no occasion, and feel no inclination, to retract a word of this. If it shall not be made good, be assured, the fault shall not be mine.

At 8:00 p.m. Lincoln returned to the Burnet House balcony to address the German Industrial Association where he spoke of immigration and opportunity.

In regard to the Germans and foreigners, I esteem them no better than other people, nor any worse. It is not my nature, when I see a people borne down by the weight of their shackles—the oppression of tyranny—to make their life more bitter by heaping upon them greater burdens; but rather would I do all in my power to raise the yoke, than to add anything that would tend to crush them.

Inasmuch as our country is extensive and new, and the countries of Europe are densely populated, if there are any abroad who desire to make this the land of their adoption, it is not in my heart to throw aught in their way, to prevent them from coming to the United States.

*The Burnet House
in Cincinnati, Ohio*



The following morning, February 13, Lincoln and party were escorted by a committee of the Ohio legislature from the Burnet House. The procession of about eight carriages arrived at the Little Miami Railroad station at 9:00 a.m. for their journey to Columbus.

Lincoln arrived in Columbus at about 2:00 p.m. and proceeded to the Ohio statehouse where Lincoln spoke before a joint meeting of the legislature where he defended his "silence" on the looming crisis. That the nation has never faced anything like the present situation and that it would be better to wait until he was in Washington, and president, with all available information before saying anything with only partial information.

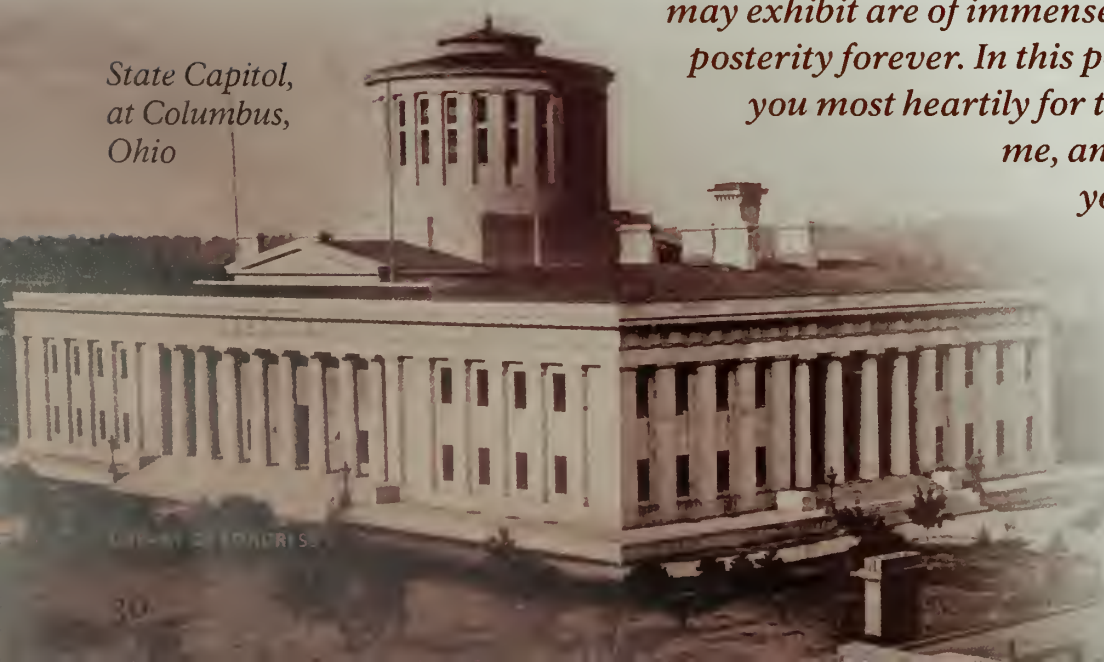
Allusion has been made to the interest felt in relation to the policy of the new administration. In this I have received from some a degree of credit for having kept silence, and from others some deprecation. I still think that I was right. In the varying and repeatedly shifting scenes of the present, and without a precedent which could enable me to judge by the past, it has seemed fitting that before speaking upon the difficulties of the country, I should have gained a view of the whole field, to be sure, after all, being at liberty to modify and change the course of policy, as future events may make a change necessary.

From the steps of the capitol Lincoln thanked those who came to see him but told them that the enthusiasm should not be about him but the future of the nation.

I am doubly thankful that you have appeared here to give me this greeting. It is not much to me, for I shall very soon pass away from you; but we have a large country and a large future before us, and the manifestations of good-will towards the government, and affection for the Union which you may exhibit are of immense value to you and your posterity forever. In this point of view it is that I thank you most heartily for the exhibition you have given me, and with this allow me to bid you an affectionate farewell.

State Capitol,
at Columbus,
Ohio

Lincoln then attended an informal reception in the rotunda of the nearby courthouse, at High and



Mound Streets. At 4:30 that afternoon, February 13, Lincoln received a telegram from Washington informing him of the results of the last step in the election process, the formal counting the votes of the Electoral College by a joint session of congress. Lincoln then attended a military ball in his honor at Deshler Hall at the southeast corner of Town and High Streets. The Lincoln family then spent the night at the home of Governor William Dennison, Jr., at Chestnut and High Streets. The Lincolns departed at about 8:00 the following morning.



*The
Monongahela
House in
Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania*

Lincoln's train traveled in rain most of the way to Pittsburgh and was delayed for a time due to a stalled freight train on the tracks. Lincoln finally arrived in Alleghany City at 8:00 p.m. where he boarded a carriage for a ride across the river and through mud soaked and crowded streets to Pittsburgh's Monongahela House, at the northwest corner of Fort Pitt and Smithfield Streets. Once inside the lobby, Lincoln stood on a chair to tell those gathered that he would make only a few remarks because of the lateness of his arrival, but promised that he would speak again the following morning.

I could not help thinking, my friends, as I traveled in the rain through your crowded streets, on my way here, that if all that [those] people were in favor of the Union, it can certainly be in no great danger—it will be preserved.

But I am talking too long, longer than I ought. You know that it has not been my custom, since I started on the route to Washington, to make long speeches; I am rather inclined to silence, and whether that be wise or not, it is at least more unusual now-a-days to find a man who can hold his tongue than to find one who cannot.

The following morning, February 14, at 8:30 Lincoln made good on his promise to speak and ended up making the longest speech of the entire journey where he spoke of maintaining cool, that there is no crisis in the nation, that the controversy was being promoted by a few “designing” politicians.



CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

*Lincoln gave a
speech at
The Weddell House
in Cleveland, Ohio*



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Notwithstanding the troubles across the river, there is really no crisis, springing from anything in the government itself. My advice, then, under such circumstances, is to keep cool. If the great American people will only keep their temper, on both sides of the line, the troubles will come to an end, and the question which now distracts the country will be settled just as surely as all other difficulties of like character which have originated in this government have been adjusted.

While in Pittsburgh, Lincoln visited his Illinois friend colleague Leonard Swett, who was at hotel for several weeks due to illness. The inaugural train then departed Pittsburgh at about 10:00 a.m. in route to Cleveland, Ohio.

Lincoln was under some pressure to speak at every stop and at Alliance, Ohio on February 15, Lincoln, while brief, did employ some typical Lincoln humor.

I appear before you merely to greet you and say farewell. I have no time for long speeches, and could not make them at every stopping place without wearing myself out. If I should make a speech at every town, I would not get to Washington until some time after the inauguration. But as I am somewhat interested in the inauguration, I would like to get there a few days before the 4th of March.

In other communities, such as Hudson, Ohio, later that day, Lincoln was even briefer and perhaps disappointed the crowd.

I stepped upon this platform to see you, and to give you an opportunity of seeing me, which I suppose you desire to do. You see by my voice that I am quite hoarse. You will not, therefore, expect a speech from me.

The weather had evidently turned cold, for Lincoln arrived at Cleveland's Euclid Street Depot, at Euclid and Seventy-Ninth Streets, on February 15, amid a snow storm. At about 4:30 p.m., Lincoln boarded an open carriage, despite the snowy weather, and rode in a military procession to the Weddell House at the southwest corner of Sixth and Superior Streets where he spoke from the balcony with assurances that slavery, where it already existed, was safe.

We have been marching about two miles through snow, rain and deep mud. The large numbers that have turned out under these circumstances testify that you are in earnest about something or other. What is happening now will not hurt those who are farther away from here. Have they not all their rights now as they ever have had? Do they not

have their fugitive slaves returned now as ever? Have they not the same constitution that they have lived under for seventy odd years? Have they not a position as citizens of this common country, and have we any power to change that position? What then is the matter with them? Why all this excitement? Why all these complaints? As I said before, this crisis is all artificial. It has no foundation in facts. If all do not join now to save the good old ship of the Union this voyage nobody will have a chance to pilot her on another voyage.

At about 9:00 a.m. on February 16, a military company of Cleveland Grays escorted Lincoln from the Weddell House to the depot.

Later that day, Lincoln's train arrived in Westfield, New York. Normally, Lincoln would have passed through this small community with the same briefness as others of its size, but Westfield contained a special citizen named Grace Bedell. Grace Bedell had written to Lincoln on October 15 of the previous year suggesting that he grow a beard. Lincoln must have anticipated that Grace was in that Westfield crowd, because he told the audience of the letter and called out for her. The Philadelphia *Enquirer* reported what Lincoln said and what happened.

Some three months ago, I received a letter from a young lady here; it was a very pretty letter, and she advised me to let my whiskers grow, as it would improve my personal appearance; acting partly upon her suggestion, I have done so; and now, if she is here, I would like to see her; . . . A small boy, mounted on a post, with his mouth and eyes both wide open, cried out, "there she is, Mr. LINCOLN," pointing to a beautiful girl, with black eyes, who was blushing all over her fair face. The President left the car, and the crowd making way for him, he reached her, and gave her several hearty kisses, and amid the yells of delight from the excited crowd, he bade her good-bye.

In Buffalo, New York, Lincoln was greeted at the Exchange Street Depot at about 4:30 p.m. by a crowd estimated at 10,000 that included former President Millard Fillmore. The group escorted Lincoln to the American Hotel on Main Street between Eagle and Court Streets. Despite police and military accompaniment the group was growing more disorderly, resulting in Major David Hunter's arm being dislocated. The Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser* reported the danger of such enthusiasm.

The lines were broken and Mr. Lincoln was able to enter his carriage. Women fainted, men were crushed under the mass of bodies and many others had their bones broken. Once out of the depot every man uttered a brief "Thank God!" for the preservation of his life. More with personal injuries were carried away and the fainted women were recovering under a free use of hydrant water.

Lincoln, having safely arrived at the American Hotel, echoed his Springfield Farewell Address in his remarks spoken from the balcony.

Your worthy Mayor has thought fit to express the hope that I may be able to relieve the country from its present—or I should say, its threatened difficulties. I am sure I bring a heart true to the work. For the ability to perform it, I must trust in that Supreme Being who has never forsaken this favored land, through the instrumentality of this great and intelligent people. Without that assistance I shall surely fail. With it I cannot fail.

An enthusiastic crowd meets Lincoln in Buffalo, New York



BUFFALO, N. Y.—ARRIVAL OF THE PRESIDENT AND ESCORT IN FRONT OF THE AMERICAN HOTEL.—FROM
PRESIDENT.

*Former President Millard Fillmore
met Lincoln in Buffalo.*



Lincoln with his son Tad, and Willie shown in the portrait standing

Lincoln was able to relax a little during his time in Buffalo because he arrived on a Saturday and would stay over until Monday morning. On Sunday morning former President Fillmore picked Lincoln up at 10:00 a.m. and they rode by carriage to the First Unitarian Church at Eagle and Franklin Streets. After church they returned for Mrs. Lincoln then proceeded to Fillmore's house on Niagara Square for dinner. The Lincolns then returned to the American Hotel which they largely had to themselves. This afforded Willie and Tad and a son of the hotel owner the space to play leap frog, to which Lincoln joined in the fun. They had supper and then attended church services at St. James Hall on the south side of Eagle Street. Lincoln's party departed Buffalo, very early the following morning, at 5:45 a.m. for Albany, New York.

At a brief stop in Syracuse, New York, Lincoln employed some political humor in declining to use a speaker's platform.

I see you have erected a very fine and handsome platform here for me, and I presume you expected me to speak from it. If I should go upon it you would imagine that I was about to deliver you a much longer speech than I am. I wish you to understand that I mean no discourtesy to you by thus declining. But I wish you to understand that though I am unwilling to go upon this platform, you are not at liberty to draw any inferences concerning any other platform with which my name has been or is connected.

Lincoln arrived in Albany at about 2:30 p.m. on February 18, at the Broadway Railroad Crossing. He then boarded a carriage for a procession to the state house where he was welcomed by Governor Edwin D. Morgan and addressed a joint session of the legislature. In his comments to the legislature, Lincoln indicated the difficulty of what lay ahead.

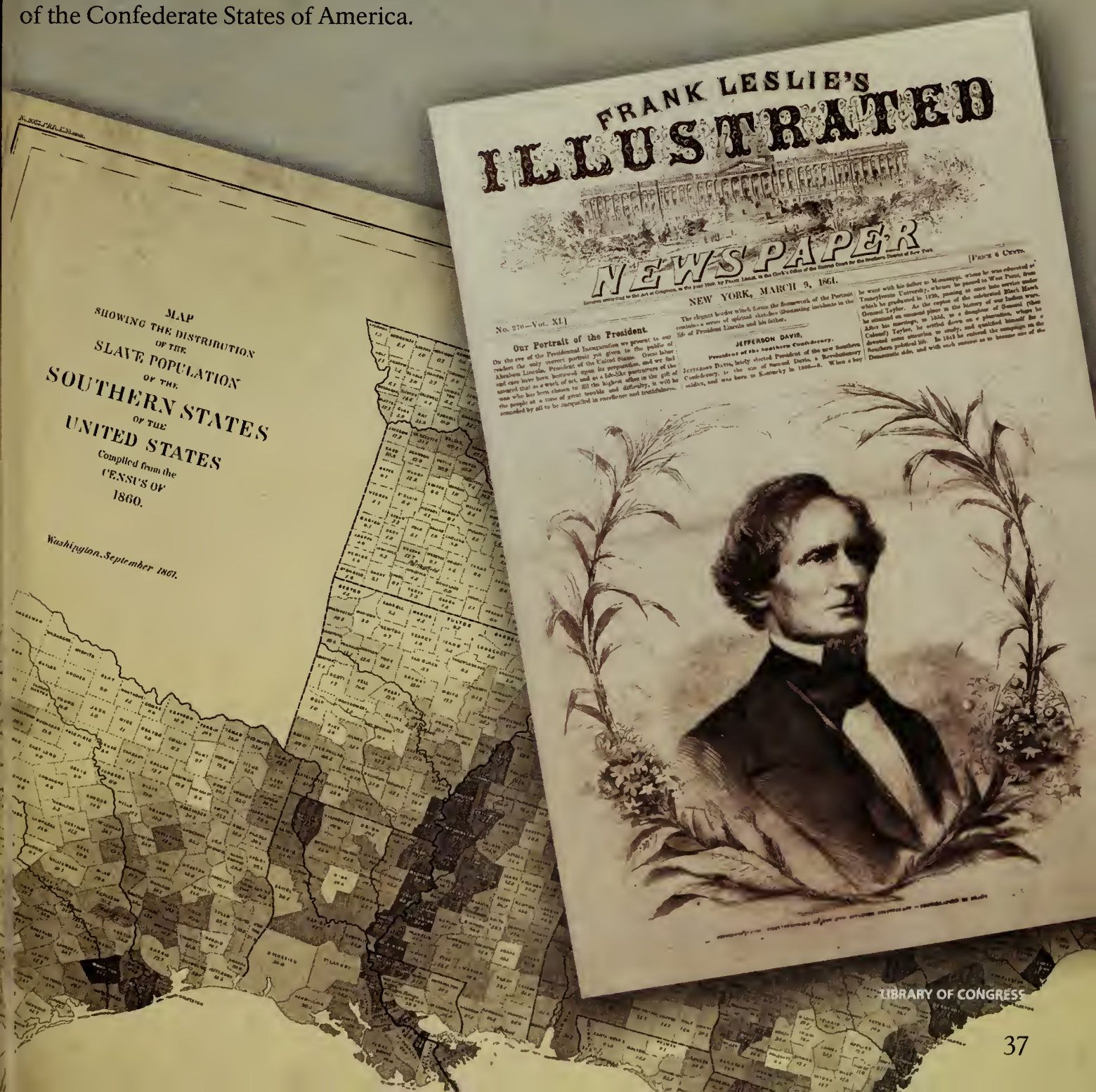
It is true that while I hold myself without mock modesty, the humblest of all individuals that have ever been elevated to the Presidency, I have a more difficult task to perform than any one of them. . . . but when the time comes I shall speak as well as I am able for the good of the present and future of this country—for the good both of the North and the South of this country—for the good of the one and the other, and of all sections of the country. In the mean time, if we have patience; if we restrain ourselves; if we allow ourselves not to run off in a passion, I still have confidence that the

Almighty, the Maker of the Universe will, through the instrumentality of this great and intelligent people, bring us through this as He has through all the other difficulties of our country.

The group then proceeded to the Delavan House at Broadway and Steuben Streets, where Lincoln received many guests before proceeding to the Governor's Mansion, on State Street, for dinner and then returned to the Delavan House by 9:00 for a reception.

It was on February 18, that a southern presidential inauguration took place. In Montgomery, Alabama, Jefferson Davis was sworn in as the president of the Confederate States of America.

Newspaper showing Jefferson Davis as the President of the Southern Confederacy.



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*Lincoln speaking from
New York City Hall*



New York's Astor House

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Lincoln arriving in New York

The following morning the Lincolns left Albany at about 7:45 and pulled into New York city's 30th Street Station at about 3:00 p.m. Evidently Mrs. Lincoln wanted to ensure that her husband made a good impression on the city for it was reported that she smoothed his hair and gave him a kiss before he left the railroad car. Lincoln occupied one of eleven carriages that formed the procession to the Astor House at 217 Broadway, between Vesey and Barclay Streets across from City Hall.

Lincoln made remarks at the Astor House at about 4:00 p.m. and then met with a variety of Republican electors, delegates, and Republican club members. The following morning Lincoln had breakfast at former congressman Moses H. Grinnell's house at Fifth Avenue and Fourteenth Street. He returned to the Astor House where he met 94 year old Joshua Dewey who had voted in every presidential election since America's first presidential election of George Washington in 1789. Lincoln then visited City Hall where he met Democratic Mayor Fernando Wood and the city council members and held a public reception which included shaking hands with about thirty War of 1812 veterans.

New York was a northern city but with close economic ties to the south through the cotton trade and in the previous month, January 1861, Mayor Wood had suggested to the City Council that New York City secede from the Union and declare itself a free city, in order to continue its profitable cotton trade with the Confederacy. During his February visit Lincoln responded to Wood's earlier sentiments with a promise of preservation of the Union.

It is with feelings of deep gratitude that I make my acknowledgment for this reception which has been given me in the great commercial city of New York. I cannot but remember that this is done by a people who do not by a majority agree with me in political sentiments.

There is nothing that can ever bring me willingly to consent to the destruction of this Union, under which not only the commercial city of New York, but the whole country has acquired its greatness . . . I understand a ship to be made for the carrying and preservation of the cargo, and so long as the ship can be saved, with the cargo, it should never be abandoned. This Union should likewise never be abandoned unless it fails and the probability of its preservation shall cease to exist without throwing the passengers and cargo overboard.

From the balcony of city hall, Lincoln made, what by this time, was his usual brief complimentary remarks.

I do not appear for the purpose of making a speech. I design to make no speech. I came merely to see you, and allow you to see me. And I have to say to you, as I have said frequently to audiences on my journey, that, in the sight, I have the best of the bargain. Assuming that you are all for the Constitution, the Union, and the perpetual liberties of this people, I bid you farewell.

The remainder of the day was taken up with a variety of activities. Lincoln and his family had dinner with Vice President-elect Hamlin at the Astor House. Showman P.T. Barnum had invited the Lincolns to visit his American Museum at the corner of Ann Street and Broadway. Lincoln declined the invitation, but Mary and the boys accepted. That evening Lincoln attended the opera, "Un Ballo in Maschera" at the Academy of Music at Fourteenth Street and Fifth Avenue where he created a bit of a stir when he wore black gloves instead of white.



Mary Lincoln, with Robert, Willie, and Tad, visited P.T. Barnum's American Museum while they were in New York

*Artist's depiction of
George Washington's
crossing of the
Delaware River into
Trenton, New Jersey*



At 8:00 a.m. the following morning, February 21, Lincoln's party traveled to Jersey City, New Jersey, across the Hudson River via the Cortland Street ferry. Lincoln then traveled on to Trenton where he spoke at the state house, first making remarks to the senate and then to the general assembly. In his remarks to the senate, Lincoln reflected on the Revolutionary War heritage of the area and what that history meant to him years ago as a young boy; what it meant to the nation in 1861; and, what it meant to the future.

In the early Revolutionary struggle, few of the States among the old Thirteen had more of the battle-fields of the country within their limits than old New-Jersey. May I be pardoned if, upon this occasion, I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger members have ever seen, "Weem's Life of Washington." I remember all the accounts there given of the battle fields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New-Jersey. The crossing of the river; the contest with the Hessians; the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that those men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing which they struggled for; that something even more than National Independence; that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come . . .


Lincoln continued his references to the founding fathers at his next stop, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Lincoln arrived at the Kensington Depot at about 4:00 p.m. and then went on to the Continental Hotel at the southeast corner of Ninth and Chestnut Streets. Lincoln spoke from the balcony of the hotel and then had dinner with Mary followed by a public reception at 8:30 p.m. Near the end of the reception, Lincoln had a meeting with his old Illinois colleague Norman B. Judd, and Frederick W. Seward, son of Lincoln's future Secretary of State William Seward. Judd called the meeting so that Frederick Seward could pass along a letter from his father regarding the discovery of an assassination plot against Lincoln planned for Baltimore. The plot was also uncovered by railroad detective Allan Pinkerton. Lincoln thanked Seward for bringing the information and promised to consider the advice given to change his travel plans, but only after meeting his promised obligations in Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

Railroad detective
Allan Pinkerton



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The following morning, February 22, Lincoln had an early appointment at Independence Hall, arriving there by carriage at about 6:30 a.m. Inside, inspired by the place and no doubt with the news of the previous night in his mind, Lincoln again spoke about the importance of the nation's founders.



I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing here in the place where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and adopted that Declaration of Independence . . . It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in that Declaration of Independence.

Independence
Hall, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania

Now, my friends, can this country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it can't be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But, if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle—I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than to surrender it.

Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course, and I may say in advance, there will be no blood shed unless it be forced upon the Government. The Government will not use force unless force is used against it.

Lincoln then stepped outside to raise a 34 star flag, including a new star for the state of Kansas which had been admitted to the union on January 29, 1861. In his remarks, he again used the past to foreshadow the future of the nation.

I am invited and called before you to participate in raising above Independence Hall the flag of our country, with an additional star upon it. I propose to say that when that flag was originally raised here it had but thirteen stars. . . . under the blessing of God, each additional star added to that flag has given additional prosperity and happiness to this country until it has advanced to its present condition; and its welfare



*Photograph of
Lincoln outside of
Independence Hall
raising a new
34 star flag*



State capitol at
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

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in the future, as well as in the past, is in your hands. . . . I think we may promise ourselves that not only the new star placed upon that flag shall be permitted to remain there to our permanent prosperity for years to come, but additional ones shall from time to time be placed there . . .

Lincoln then left for Harrisburg, arriving at the Vine and Second Street Railroad Station at about 1:30 p.m. On his way to Harrisburg, Lincoln had made brief remarks in Leaman Place and Lancaster Pennsylvania. The Lancaster *Evening Express* reported Lincoln's comments at Leaman Place in response to a call from the crowd to see Mary.

Loud calls being made for Mrs. Lincoln, Mr. L. brought her out, and said he had concluded to give them ``the long and the short of it!'' This remark—with the disparity between the length of himself and wife—produced a loud burst of laughter, followed by enthusiastic cheers as the train moved off.

In Harrisburg, Lincoln spoke from the Jones House at the southeast corner of Market and Second Streets. He spoke here about the military escort that he received and the hope that he would not have to call them into service, especially against their own countrymen.

While I have been proud to see to-day the finest military array, I think, that I have ever seen, allow me to say in regard to those men that they give hope of what may be done when war is inevitable. But, at the same time, allow me to express the hope that in the shedding of blood their services may never be needed, especially in the shedding of fraternal blood. It shall be my endeavor to preserve the peace of this country so far as it can possibly be done, consistently with the maintenance of the institutions of the country. With my consent, or without my great displeasure, this country shall never witness the shedding of one drop of blood in fraternal strife.

Lincoln then proceeded to the state house where at 2:30 he addressed a joint meeting of the general assembly. Upon his return to the Jones House Lincoln learned about the new plans that had been made for the remainder of his trip. Lincoln's friend, Judge David Davis, asked Lincoln's opinion of the plans, to which he replied that, *"unless there are some other reasons besides ridicule I am disposed to carry out Judd's plan."* Lincoln then attended a dinner after which he declined Governor Curtin's invitation to spend the night at Curtin's home. Instead

Judge David Davis



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Lincoln and his party, without Mary and the boys, left the Jones House to secretly catch the 11:00 p.m. train to Washington.

Lincoln travelled through the night; no longer making whistle stop speeches, but quietly passing through Baltimore's President Street Station, at President, Canton, and Aliceanna Streets, at about 3:30 a.m. Lincoln was transferred to the Camden Station at Camden and Howard Streets from the President Street Station by having his car pulled by horse down Pratt Street from one station to the other.

The train proceeded on to Washington, where Lincoln was greeted at the Baltimore and Ohio

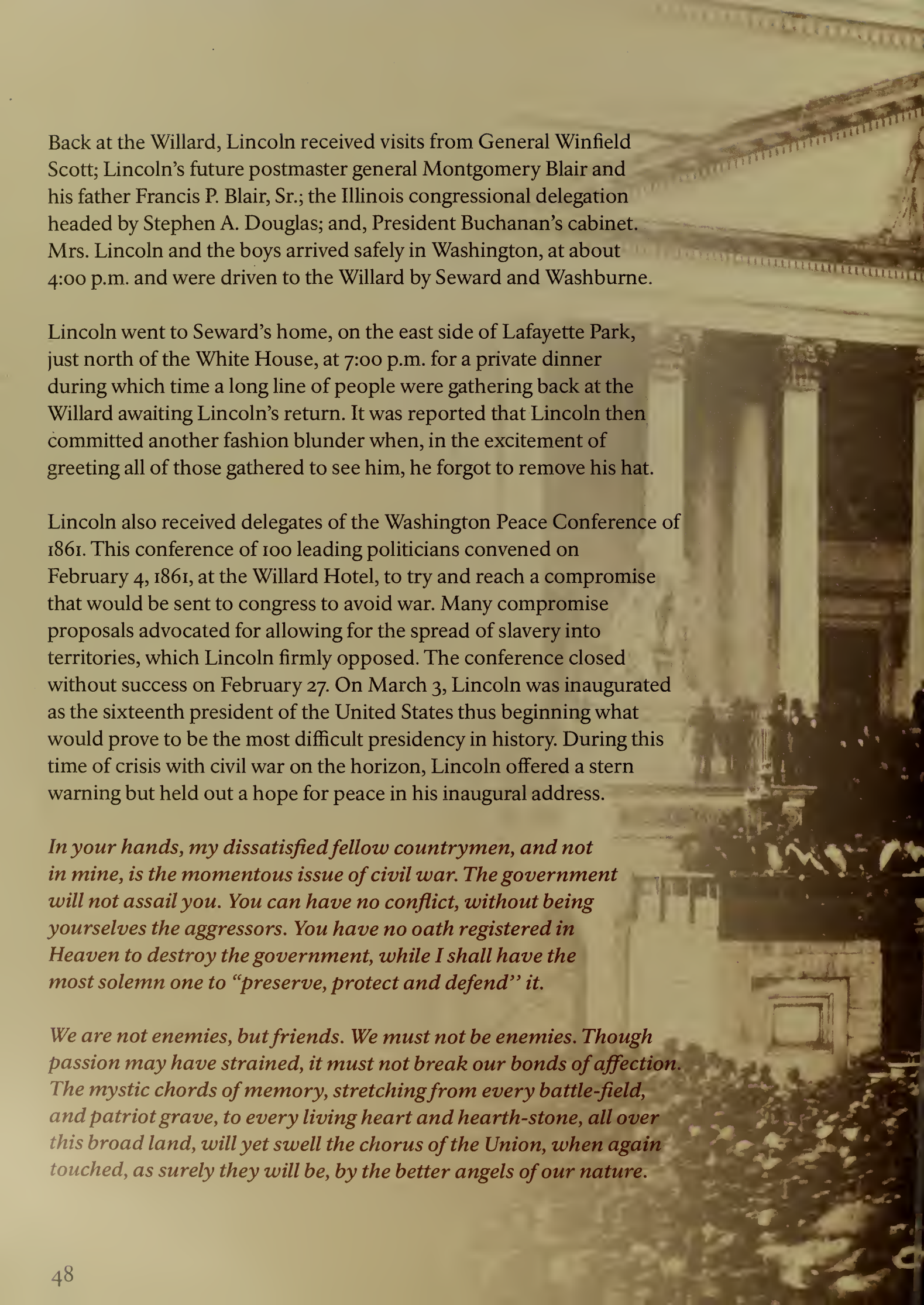
Station at New Jersey Avenue and D Street NW at 6:00 a.m. by Illinois Congressman Elihu Washburne. Lincoln and Washburne then traveled to the Willard Hotel at 1401 Pennsylvania Avenue, where they had breakfast with William Seward. They then proceeded to the White House where they called on President Buchanan and met members of Buchanan's cabinet.

At some point in the morning Lincoln had also telegraphed Mary, who was still in Harrisburg, that he had safely arrived. Mary and the boys' railroad car had to change stations in Baltimore just as her husband's did, but their car was harassed as it was pulled down Pratt Street.

Artist's depiction of Lincoln's arrival in Washington, D.C. on February 23, 1861



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Back at the Willard, Lincoln received visits from General Winfield Scott; Lincoln's future postmaster general Montgomery Blair and his father Francis P. Blair, Sr.; the Illinois congressional delegation headed by Stephen A. Douglas; and, President Buchanan's cabinet. Mrs. Lincoln and the boys arrived safely in Washington, at about 4:00 p.m. and were driven to the Willard by Seward and Washburne.

Lincoln went to Seward's home, on the east side of Lafayette Park, just north of the White House, at 7:00 p.m. for a private dinner during which time a long line of people were gathering back at the Willard awaiting Lincoln's return. It was reported that Lincoln then committed another fashion blunder when, in the excitement of greeting all of those gathered to see him, he forgot to remove his hat.

Lincoln also received delegates of the Washington Peace Conference of 1861. This conference of 100 leading politicians convened on February 4, 1861, at the Willard Hotel, to try and reach a compromise that would be sent to congress to avoid war. Many compromise proposals advocated for allowing for the spread of slavery into territories, which Lincoln firmly opposed. The conference closed without success on February 27. On March 3, Lincoln was inaugurated as the sixteenth president of the United States thus beginning what would prove to be the most difficult presidency in history. During this time of crisis with civil war on the horizon, Lincoln offered a stern warning but held out a hope for peace in his inaugural address.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict, without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect and defend" it.

We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearth-stone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.



*Lincoln's first
Inaugural address
in front of yet
to be finished
United States
Capitol building in
Washington DC*

This last minute appeal failed to stop the approaching war and on April 12, 1861, Confederate forces fired upon the Union garrison at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. The fort surrendered two days later. In response, Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 volunteers to “suppress the rebellion,” and four more states – Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina – seceded from the Union and joined the Confederate States of America. The “House Divided” crisis that Lincoln had predicted two years earlier had come to pass.

In April of 1861, the future of the United States of America – as well as the future of its fragile experiment in democracy – was in the direst of perils. A new President, elected by less than 40% of the vote, was faced by the secession (rebellion) of 11 of the 35 states of the Union, as the young nation divided against

itself. As Lincoln later mused, *“Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.”* And that war which came can only be described as the greatest disaster in the history of the United States, with a death toll of 620,000 Americans, 2% of the country’s population (by comparison 2% of today’s population is approximately 5.6 million), and untold destruction of homes, dreams, and property.



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Dead in front of Dunker Church after the Battle of Antietam, in Sharpsburg, Maryland

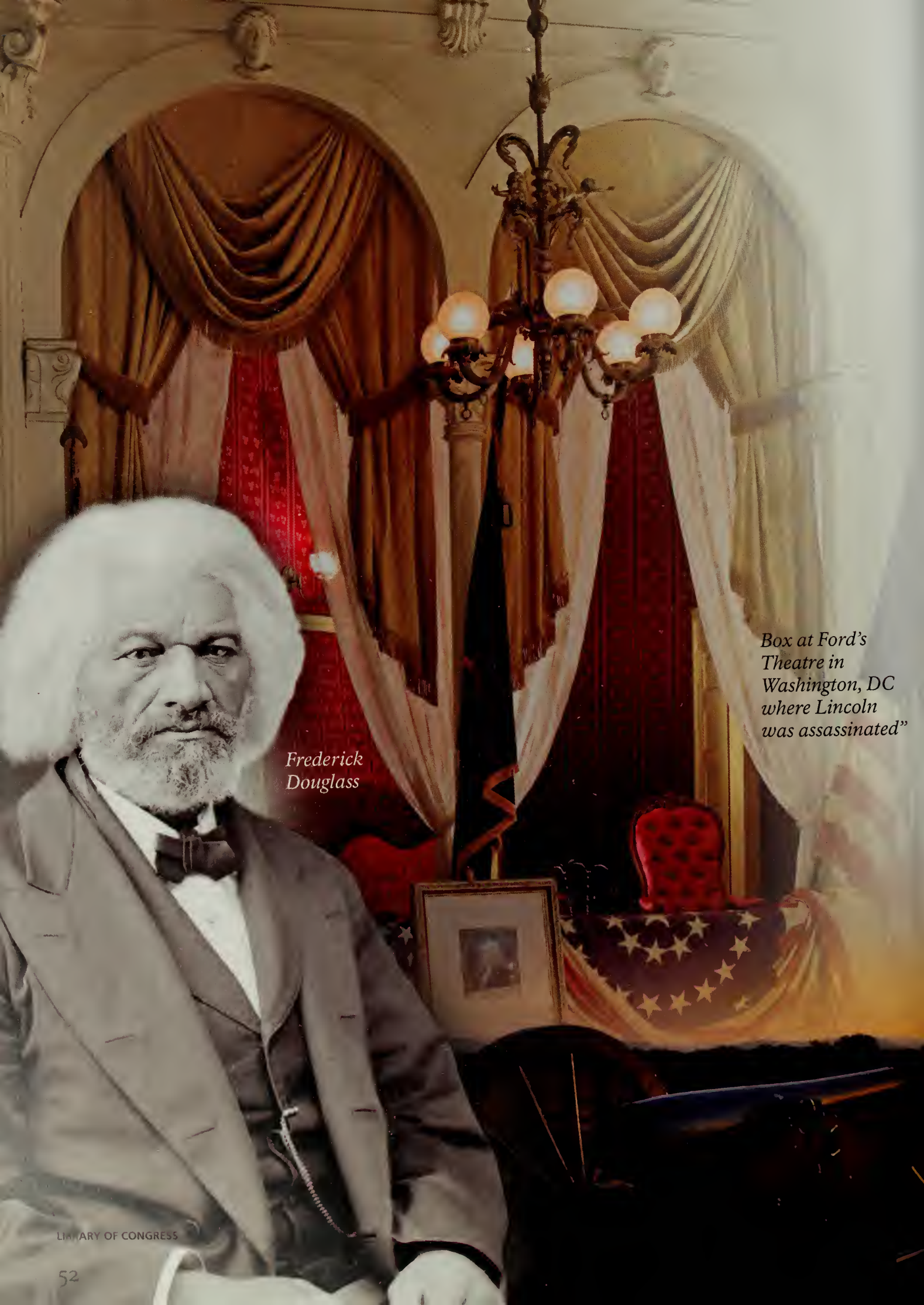
But the Civil War era can also be described as the era of our greatest achievement. The Civil War decided, once and for all, the question of Union or secession. Before 1861, Americans grappled with the permanence or impermanence of the Union as a major political and constitutional question, with respected public figures taking opposing sides. Although arguments about states’ rights did not end in 1865, discussion about the permanence of the Union halted abruptly.

The Civil War abolished, once and for all, the institution of slavery. The thirteenth amendment prohibited slavery and brought freedom to 4 million Americans. Granted, we still struggle after 150 years, to refine this concept of citizenship, and to meet Abraham Lincoln’s challenge of a “new birth of freedom.” Lincoln knew on December 3, 1861, how important their actions would be to us 150 years later when he warned Congress that *“The struggle of today, is not altogether for today—it is for a vast future also.”*

*The Confederate attack
on Fort Sumter in Charleston,
South Carolina*



*Arlington National Cemetery,
Arlington, Virginia*



*Frederick
Douglass*

*Box at Ford's
Theatre in
Washington, DC
where Lincoln
was assassinated"*

On April 14, 1876, the eleventh anniversary of Lincoln's assassination, Frederick Douglass spoke of the challenges that Lincoln faced as president and Lincoln's skill in successfully turning a war for preservation of the United States and its democracy into a war in which a preserved nation lived up to its democratic ideals with the end of slavery.

His great mission was to accomplish two things: first, to save his country from dismemberment and ruin; and, second, to free his country from the great crime of slavery. Viewed from the genuine abolition ground, Mr. Lincoln seemed tardy, cold, dull, and indifferent; but measuring him by the sentiment of his country, a sentiment he was bound as a statesman to consult, he was swift, zealous, radical, and determined.

Few great public men have ever been the victims of fiercer denunciation than Abraham Lincoln was during his administration. He was assailed by Abolitionists; he was assailed by slave-holders; he was assailed for not making the war an abolition war; and he was bitterly assailed for making the war an abolition war.

But dying as he did die, by the red hand of violence, killed, assassinated, taken off without warning, not because of personal hate—for no man who knew Abraham Lincoln could hate him—but because of his fidelity to union and liberty, he is doubly dear to us, and his memory will be precious forever.

Viewed in these terms, the Civil War era saw not only our greatest military struggle, but our greatest social revolution. The Civil War was indeed “the most momentous era in American history” – it defined who we are as a nation, both then and now, and what beliefs we hold “self-evident.”



The battlefield of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania is a memorial today

Where can we go today and connect with the story of Abraham Lincoln, who led our country through its days of greatest peril? And where can we go to connect with the story of the Civil War, that climatic struggle which literally pitted brothers against brothers for four long, weary years? Perhaps we could visit some of those places that are preserved to tell those stories, the National Parks which are preserving those sites, unimpaired, for our understanding and appreciation. Walk where Lincoln walked, where slaves toiled, or where soldiers marched. What better place to experience Lincoln's humble beginnings than doing so while surrounded by the hills and forests that he knew growing up; where better to learn about the challenges of a coming presidency, than in the parlor of his home where he was told that he was the Republican's choice for that office; where better to talk about the inspiration for the Gettysburg Address than at that place where some 3,000 soldiers died; and, where better to tell the tragic story of the Lincoln assassination than next to the theater box where it occurred?

One of the
"Little Rock Nine"
students going to
school, 1957



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There are many more places to visit as the national struggle for freedom continued beyond the end of the Civil War. Beyond the passage in 1865, of the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery; beyond the passage in 1868, of the Fourteenth Amendment ensuring citizenship to African Americans; and beyond the passage in 1870, of the Fifteenth Amendment ensuring the right to vote is not denied on the basis of "*race, color, or a previous condition of*

servitude." The story extends to "Cedar Hill," the Washington D.C. home of Frederick Douglass from 1877 to his death in 1895; it extends to Alabama's Tuskegee Institute, where education provided hope and opportunity to former slaves and their children; to Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas, where nine African American teenagers braved hostility in 1957 so that they could simply attend school; to Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail in Alabama, where in 1965, "Bloody Sunday" showed the depths of people's resolve to exercise their right to vote; and,

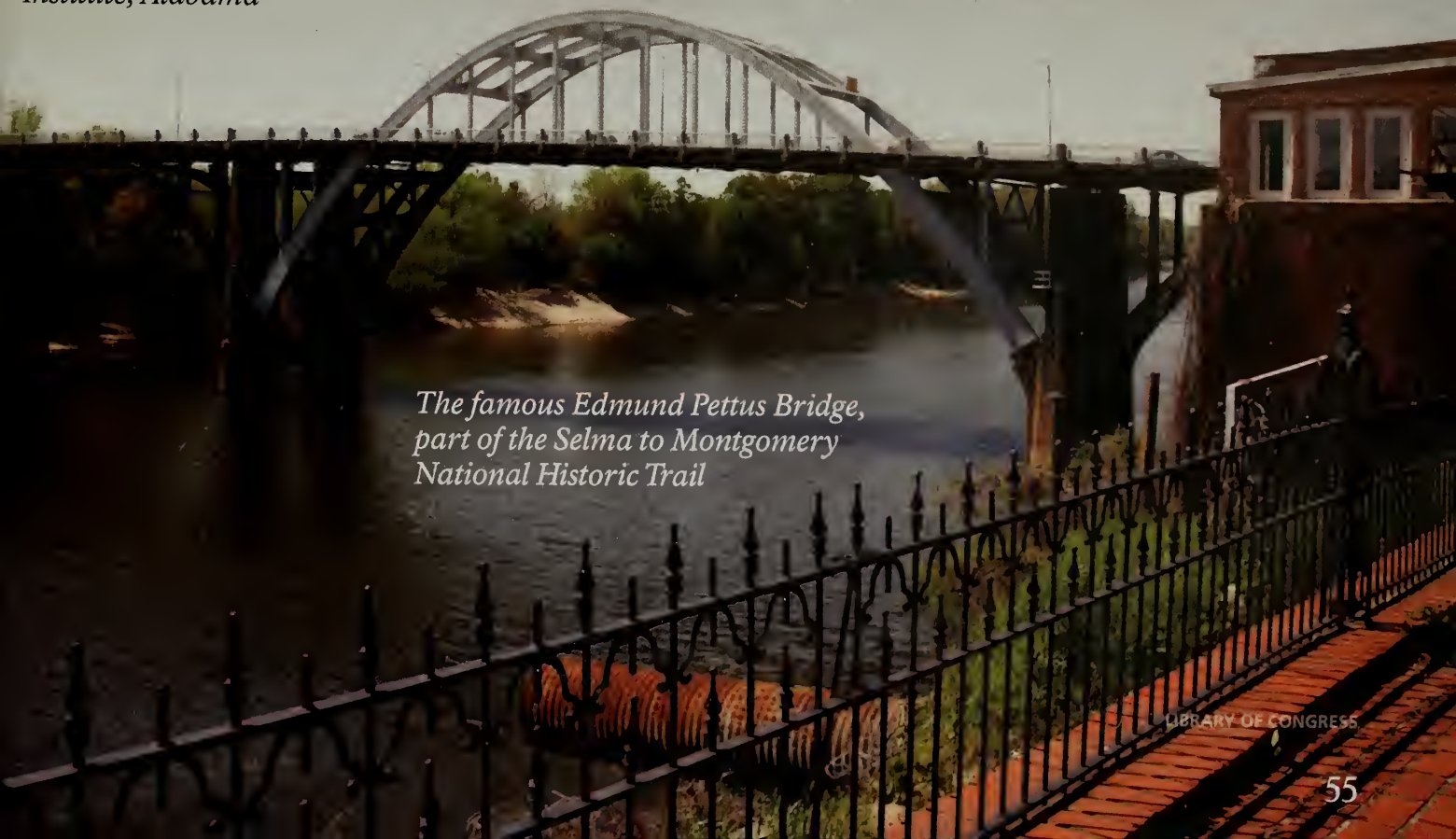


*Home of
Frederick
Douglass*

FREDERICK DOUGLAS NATIONAL
HISTORIC SITE

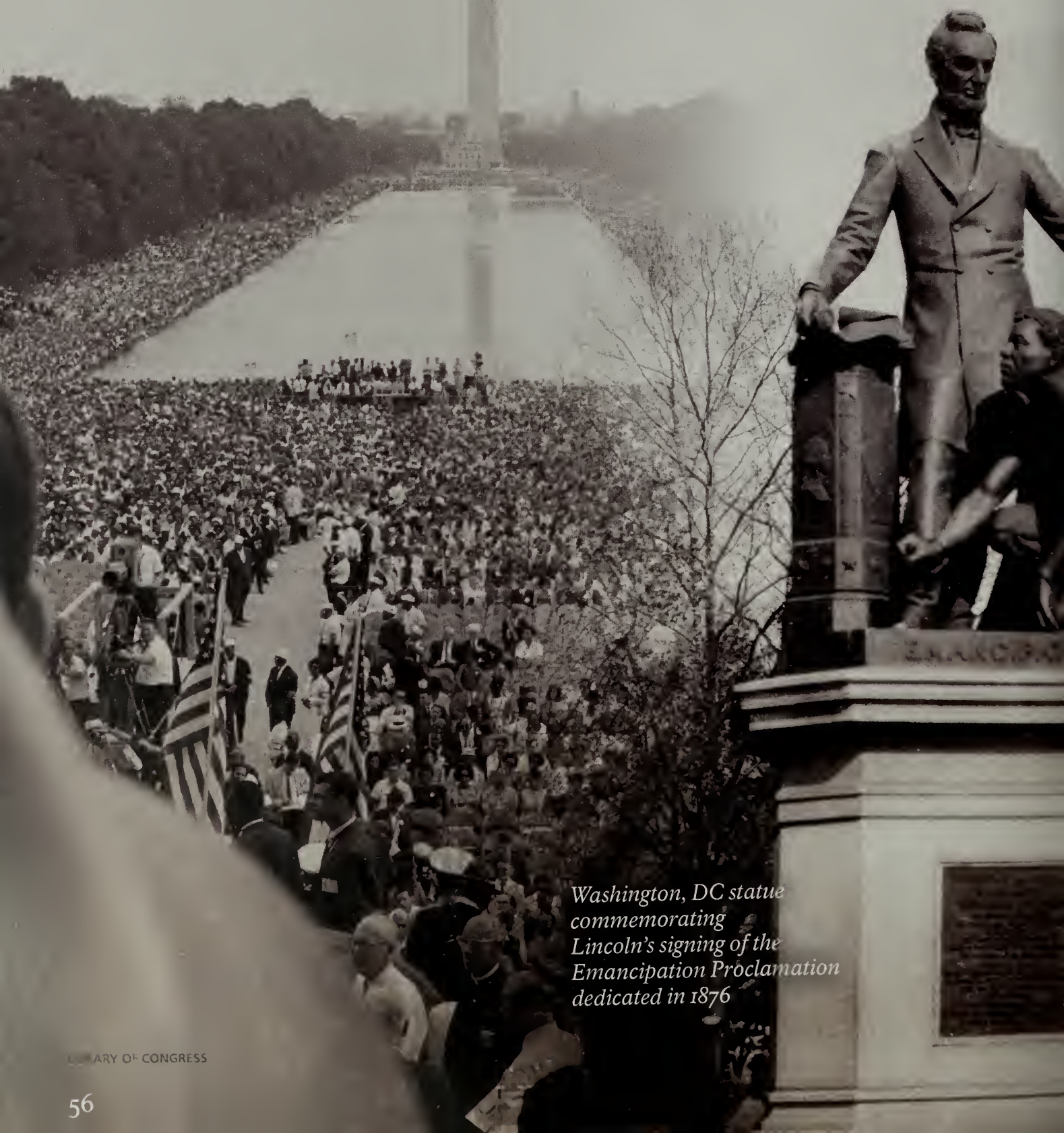


*Group of young men
at Alabama Hall, Tuskegee
Institute, Alabama*



*The famous Edmund Pettus Bridge,
part of the Selma to Montgomery
National Historic Trail*

*Crowd of approximately
200,000 people gathered
at the Lincoln Memorial in
Washington, DC on
August 28, 1963 and listened
to Dr. Martin Luther King*



*Washington, DC statue
commemorating
Lincoln's signing of the
Emancipation Proclamation
dedicated in 1876*

to Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, in Georgia, where in 1944, as a fifteen year old Booker T. Washington High School student, King gave a prize winning speech, titled “The Negro Constitution.”

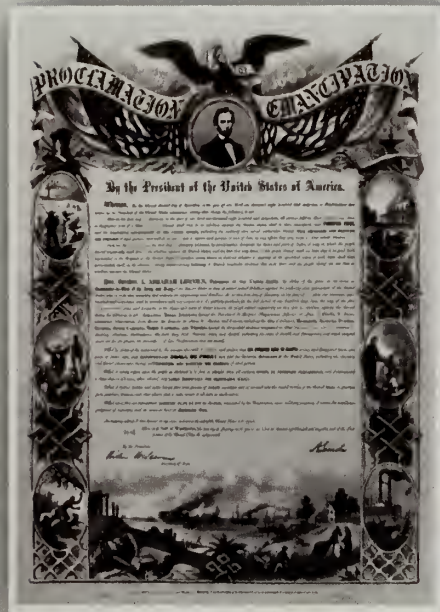
On January 1, 1863 the proclamation emancipating the slaves which had been decreed by President Lincoln in September took effect, millions of Negroes faced a rising sun of a new day begun.

America gave its full pledge of freedom seventy-five years ago. Slavery has been a strange paradox in a nation founded on the principles that all men are created free and equal. Finally after tumult and war, the nation in 1865 took a new stand, freedom for all people. The new order was backed by amendments to the national constitution making it the fundamental law that thenceforth there should be no discrimination anywhere in the “land of the free” on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

Today thirteen million black sons and daughters of our forefathers continue the fight for the translation of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments from writing on the printed page to actuality. We believe with them that ‘if freedom is good for any it is good for all’.

Young King ended his speech with “The spirit of Lincoln still lives.” Years later, in 1961, King, by then a national a civil rights leader, wrote to President, John F. Kennedy, Jr.

The struggle for freedom, Mr. President, of which the Civil War was but a bloody chapter, continues throughout our land today. The courage and heroism of Negro citizens at Montgomery, Little Rock, New Orleans, Prince Edward County, and Jackson, Mississippi is only a further effort to affirm that democratic heritage so painfully won, in part, upon the grassy battlefield of Antietam, Lookout Mountain, and Gettysburg.



Popular illustrated version of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation



King's most famous look back at Lincoln and the Civil War came on August 28, 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. to an audience of approximately 200,000.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.





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Nearly four hundred National Park Service sites across this nation belong to, and are preserved by, the American people.

And because they have been saved, we today can walk through the home of Martin Luther King, Jr., stand in the hall where we declared our independence, or touch the names of American heroes on a black wall in Washington, DC.

And when visiting them, these places speak to us, not only of our past, but also of our future.



LINCOLN HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Whether it is a sunken battleship in Pearl Harbor, or an iron lady in New York, or the home of the 16th President of the United States in Springfield, Illinois, these places remind us of who we were, of who we are, and most importantly, who we hope to be.

Learn more about America's special places at www.nps.gov.